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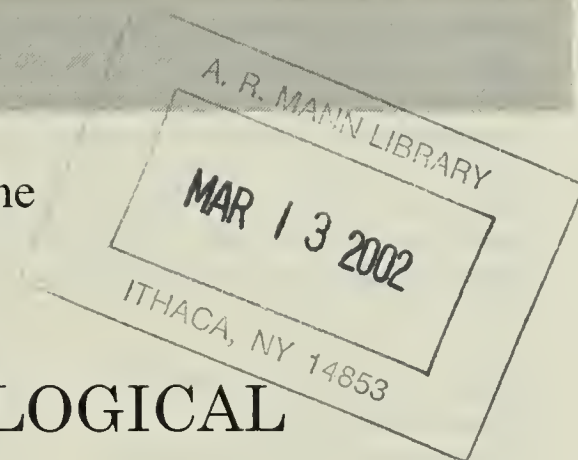
# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 68, No. 1 January, 2002



### THE MONTH: December

by Joseph Thill

Thanks to two stationary weather fronts formed by deep high pressure systems from Canada and the Atlantic Coast, November's halcyon weather lingered well into December. There was no measurable precipitation, either as rain or snow, while daily temperatures and percentage of possible sunshine at Buffalo were above average for the first twelve days of the month. The weather for the rest of the period was seasonal -- the first general snowfall of the season, four to six inches in the higher elevations of southern Erie county and southwestern New York on December 8th but virtually no measurable snow at Buffalo or northern Erie County until December 24th. On that date, the Jet Stream dropped down from Canada across the upper Great Lakes with cold polar air in its wake which, upon contact with the warm open waters of Lake Erie, produced cold winds, squall activity and heavy precipitation in the form of snow over Buffalo and its northern and eastern suburbs. This capriciously spared the south towns of Erie County and the Southern Tier, much to the delight of the residents of those regions! For the next five days of what the *Buf-*

*falo News* described as "the whitest Christmas ever in Western New York - perhaps anywhere", this storm dropped a record 71.9 inches of snow on Buffalo and its environs. In a scenario reminiscent of the infamous "Blizzard of '77", on December 29th the Governor of New York State put our battered region under a state

of emergency, dispatching the N.Y. State National Guard with snow removal equipment to assist the beleaguered citizens of Buffalo and the City of Lackawanna in digging out. At the time of his action, the lake effect snow squalls had shifted to the south shore of Lake Erie and the Southern Tier counties. The National Weather Bureau, in commenting on this weather system, advised that the winds accompanying it were weaker than expected, sparing us the dreaded blizzard effect of blowing snow.

There were only eight days of measurable precipitation in the form of snow at Buffalo this month, most of which accumulated in the five day period between December 24th and 28th, measuring a record 82.7 inches in depth, 58.4 inches above normal for the period; rainfall at Buffalo measured 6.46 inches, 2.79 inches above normal; 32.5% of possible sunshine was recorded. The average high temperature for the month was 27 °F, 5.3 degrees above normal; the temperature of Lake Erie slipped from 44 to 35 °F at month's end. (Meteorological data provided by the National Weather Service Monthly Weather Service Summary for Buffalo as posted on the Internet and by the Daily Weather Summary in the *Buffalo News*.)

Except for the localized heavy lake effect squalls energized by the warm waters of Lake Erie during the last week of the month, December was pleasant with mild temperature readings and below average precipitation luring most active bird-watchers afield. And indeed, the month had a most auspicious beginning: on December 5th, Dave Muller, a local resident, was birding in the Bond Lake County Park on the Lower Mountain Road in the Town of Lewiston (Niagara County) where he found a small, grayish thrush that was more slender and longer tailed than a Bluebird.

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ring, buffy wing patches and white outer tail feathers as well as its frugivorous diet, sustaining itself on a variety of fruit-bearing vines and shrubs to be found in abundance at Bond Lake County Park. Although Townsend's Solitaire has been known to occur as a winter vagrant in the Niagara Peninsula and other parts of Southern Ontario, Dave Muller's discovery represents the first record of the bird's occurrence in Western New York State.

The continuation of unseasonably warm temperatures and pleasant atmospheric conditions in October and November resulted in a protracted autumn passage for migrants continuing through the Niagara Frontier in December. On December 3rd, it was "deja vu all over again" for Brendan Klick as he discovered a Northern Gannet on Lake Ontario sitting on the water, in a flock of Herring and Ring-billed gulls. He

He observed the bird flying about and perching on the tops of trees in a conifer plantation as well as in the branches of adjacent deciduous trees. Muller was puzzled as to the bird's identity but upon consulting the literature, he returned to the park on December 10th, located the bird in the same habitat and identified it as a Townsend's Solitaire, a vagrant from the coniferous forests of western North America. The identification was subsequently confirmed by Willie D'Anna and a host of other local birders who found the solitaire remarkably tolerant of their presence; it was still to be found in that locale at month's end. Most of the observers took note of the bird's diagnostic white eye

observed the bird from Krull Park in the Town of Wilson in Niagara County while exactly one year previous to this observation, on December 3rd, he made a similar observation of a gannet on Lake Ontario in the Town of Somerset in Niagara County. On December 2nd, Bill Watson, in the course of scanning waterfowl at the Cayuga Pool in the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge in Genesee County was surprised to find a Great Egret perched in a tree in the company of four Great Blue Herons in a wooded area behind the pool. The egret, with its all white plumage, yellow bill and black legs and feet, "was unmistakable" to Watson who has done extensive field work with this species, but had not seen it at this late date in our study area before. Earlier on this date, Watson observed three Trumpeter Swans on the Windmill Marsh at the New York State Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area. The swans were in the company of a large flock of Canada Geese from which they were easily distinguished by their white plumage and large size. He noted a "flesh-salmon colored neck band" adorning one of the swans identifying it as part of the Federal Government's ultralight project to introduce these birds as a breeding species in the wetlands of the state (See *Prothonotary*, Vol. 67:11.2001, pp.105-106).

For the 11th consecutive year California Gulls are wintering in the lower Niagara River gorge at Niagara Falls where Betsy Potter identified an adult bird on December 1st among the myriad Herring, Ring-billed and Bonaparte's Gulls flying between the power plants on both sides of the river. On the following day, Willie D'Anna, Potter and others saw two California Gulls in the gorge at this location. This gull has been recorded as occurring almost annually, casually or accidentally, in seven states in the eastern and central United States as well as the Province of Ontario, Canada where abortive breeding attempts with other species at Toronto Harbor and Long Point on Lake Erie have been reported. It is possible that a viable breeding population in eastern North America will emerge. There were three sightings of the Black-headed Gull, *Larus ridibundus*, an uncommon winter visitant on the Niagara River, in December. All three sightings were reported by Willie D'Anna and involved single birds: the first flying over the Whirlpool in the lower Niagara River gorge on December 1st, the second also in the lower river at the Lewiston Dock on the 8th, the third in a large flock of Bonaparte's Gulls at dusk on the 8th at the mouth of the river at Niagara-on-the-Lake as they flew out to roost in Lake Ontario. D'Anna was uncertain as to the actual number of Black-headed Gulls as the field marks of all three birds were similar.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	1	1	<u>Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.</u>	Morgante
"	3	90	Wilson	Ewald
"	7	120	Olcott	Klick, Sowinski
"	9	125	Somerset	Fox
"	29	5	Porter	D'Anna, Morgante
Common Loon	1	4	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Morgante
"	9	1	Dayton	DeSha
"	29	3	Porter	Morgante
Pied-billed Grebe	22-31	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
Horned Grebe	24	2	Athol Springs	Andrle
* <u>Northern Gannet</u>	3	1	Olcott	Klick
D.-crested Cormorant	2;8	19;8	Niagara Falls	D'Anna; Morgante
"	14	5	Wilson	Klick
"	22	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
"	29	1	Porter	Morgante
"	30	3	Port Weller, Ont.	Bellerby
Great Egret	2	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
Black-cr. Night-Heron	27	1 imm.	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Welser, Schalbachs
Snow Goose	2	16	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
"	3-16	1 imm. blue	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	8	3	Wethersfield	Fox
"	18;22	2;3	Batavia WWTP	Watson; Klick
"	22;27	1;1	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Klick; Fox
"	22	1 wh.	Clarence Turf Farm	Klick, Harris
Mute Swan	9	2	Olcott	Fox
"	14	3	Wilson	Klick
<u>Trumpeter Swan</u>	2	3 banded	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Watson
Tundra Swan	8	47	Beaver Is. S.P.	Hess
"	18;22	8	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Watson; Klick
Wood Duck	1	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Harper
"	3	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	5	5	Hamburg	Andrle
"	29	1	Lockport	Rising
Gadwall	18	31	Batavia WWTP	Watson
American Black Duck	18	31	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Northern Shoveler	2,18	<u>262</u> ,161	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	<u>22</u>	177	Batavia WWTP	Klick
Northern Pintail	2,18	45,39	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	22	3	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
Green-winged Teal	8	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	9	1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson

<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	9	1	Somerset	Fox
"	22	4	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
Ring-necked Duck	2;22	518;52	Batavia WWTP	Watson; Klick
"	8	550	Attica Reservoir	Fox
"	16	58	Lewiston Reservoir	Klick, Harris
Lesser Scaup	2,18	27,2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
*Harlequin Duck	5	1	Wilson	Ewald
White-winged Scoter	9	1000	Somerset	Fox
Black Scoter	9	2	Somerset	Fox
Long-tailed Duck	2;22	1;1	Batavia WWTP	Watson; Klick
Bufflehead	2	68	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Hooded Merganser	8	125	Attica Reservoir	Fox
Ruddy Duck	2,18;22	865,488;354	Batavia WWTP	Watson; Klick
Bald Eagle	2	1	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Watson
"	8	2	Attica Reservoir	Fox
"	9,18	1 ad	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
"	9	1 imm.	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	18	1 imm.	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Watson
"	24	1 ad	Bond Lake Park	Cooper
Rough-legged Hawk	9	1	Olcott	Yoerg, Henderson
"	9	1	Dayton	DeSha
"	26	1	Boston	Andrle
Merlin	<u>1-31</u>	4 max.	Buffalo (UB)	Yoerg
"	<u>8</u>	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna
"	<u>9</u>	1	Porter	Yoerg
American Coot	5	38	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
Killdeer	8	2	Attica Reservoir	Fox
Purple Sandpiper	18	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Iron
Little Gull	1	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Morgante
"	2	1	Queenston, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7	3	Lewiston	Klick, Sowinski
"	9	1	Somerset	Fox
<u>Black-headed Gull</u>	1	1	Whirlpool	D'Anna
"	8	1	Queenston, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	8	1	Niag.-on-the-Lake	D'Anna
Bonaparte's Gull	22,24	4140,8330	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
<u>California Gull</u>	1,2,8,9	1,2,1,1	R. Moses Power Plant	D'Anna
Iceland Gull	18	6	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Iron
Lesser Black-b. Gull	2	9	Niag Falls & Ad Beck	D'Anna et al
Glaucous Gull	16	1	Lewiston Reservoir	Klick, Harris
Black-leg. Kittiwake	1	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Morgante
Sabine's Gull	<u>3</u>	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Yoerg
Snowy Owl	1;23	2;4	Buffalo Harbor	Morgante; Potter, D'Anna
"	12	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Losito, Andes
"	13	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Yoerg
"	29	1	Niag Falls Airport	S&T O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl	27	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Welser, Schalbachs
Red-headed Wdpkr.	15	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	Fox
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	29	1	Colden	Wojewodzki
Eastern Phoebe	<u>29</u>	1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	D'Anna
Northern Shrike	2	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	9	1	Yates	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	9	1	Somerset	Yoerg
"	22	1	Alabama	Klick, Harris
Common Raven	8	2	<u>Attica Reservoir</u>	Fox
"	12,15	1,6	Alfred	Brooks
N. Rough-w. Swallow	<u>8</u>	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna
Carolina Wren	1-31	2	Franklinville	DeSha
"	2	2	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	3	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	8-31	1	Colden	Wojewodski
"	16	1	Bond Lake Park	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	2	Lancaster	Morgante
Winter Wren	5	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
"	22	1	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna, Potter
"	22	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	23	1	Bond Lake Park	D'Anna
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	2	1	Bond Lake Park	Yoerg, Henderson
Eastern Bluebird	14	2	Porter	Klick
"	18	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
"	21	6	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Klick, Harris
"	29	9	Lockport	Rising
* <u>Townsend's Solitaire</u>	23,25,26	1	Bond Lake Park	D'Anna et al
"	26,30	1	Bond Lake Park	Deleon
"	29	1	Bond Lake Park	Morgante
"	30	1	Bond Lake Park	Rising
Hermit Thrush	9;29	3;1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Fox; D'Anna
Gray Catbird	1	1	Queenston, Ont.	Potter, DiTommaso
Northern Mockingbird	22	1	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna, Potter
Yellow-r. Warbler	2	3	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Yoerg
"	18	6	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
Common Yellowthroat	2	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Yoerg
"	<u>22</u>	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick et al
Chipping Sparrow	2	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Yoerg
Swamp Sparrow	3,31	1,1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	22	12	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
Dark-eyed Junco				
<i>J. h. oregonus</i>	1,7,25-31	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
Lapland Longspur	29	26	Porter	Morgante
"	29	2	Cambria	Rising
Snow Bunting	2	70	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	3	55	Wilson	Ewald
"	9	24	Dayton	DeSha
"	28	2	Buffalo	Yoerg
Red-w. Blackbird	28-31	5 max.	Darien(f)	Harper
"	30,31	3	Colden	Wojewodski
Brown-headed Cowbird	29-31	3	Colden	Wojewodski
"	31	2	Darien(f)	Harper
Pine Grosbeak	9,21;31	8,8;1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Yoerg; S&T O'Donnell
"	29	16	Bond Lake Park	Morgante et al
Purple Finch	29	1	Lockport	Rising
White-w. Crossbill	15	1	Franklinville	Klick
Common Redpoll	2	3	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Yoerg
"	18	9	Batavia WWTP	Watson

<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	21	7	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Klick, Yoerg
Pine Siskin	1-31	71 max.	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	1-31	35 max.	Darien(f)	Harper
"	7,21	1,1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Klick
"	9	1	Somerset	Fox
"	9	5	Franklinville	DeSha
Evening Grosbeak	1-24	12 max.	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	15	2	Franklinville	Klick

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:** 287

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:** 3

**Total for the year 2001:** 290

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Mike Morgante, 16 Lakeside Crescent, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086 (email: Morgmmm@AOL.com).

<u>Species</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
<u>Thayer's Gull</u>	12/18/2001	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Klick
"	12/18/2001	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Klick

#### **Addenda 2000**

Pine Warbler	<u>12/28</u>	1	Orchard Park	Happ
<u>Western Tanager</u>	<u>5/7</u>	1	Point Albino, Ont.	Stevens, Jr. et al
<u>Harris's Sparrow</u>	<u>12/1</u>	1	Niag.-on-the-Lake, Ont.	Roy

#### **Addenda 2001**

Brant	10/19	1	Shelby	Yoerg
C. Merganser	6/29	1	Allegany State Park	Hess
Bald Eagle	1/7	1 imm.	Fort Niagara State Park	Landon, et al
"	1/12	2	Niag.-on-the-Lake, Ont.	Landon, et al
"	1/12	1 ad. 1 imm.	Lewiston	Landon, et al
Merlin	<u>1/25</u>	1	Tonawanda	Suggs
<u>Gyr Falcon</u>	2/18	1	Waverly Beach, Ont.	McLaughlin
Peregrine Falcon	9/4	1	Rock Point P.P., Ont.	Yoerg
Stilt Sandpiper	9/22	1	Machias	DeSha
Common Snipe	10/12	34	Machias	DeSha
Little Gull	1/12	3	Queenston, Ont.	Landon, et al
Snowy Owl	1/26	1	Wheatfield	Landon, et al
Short-eared Owl	2/4	1	Wheatfield	Landon, et al
Common Nighthawk	8/23	70	Amherst	Brown
White-eyed Vireo	<u>5/1</u>	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Red-eyed Vireo	<u>5/1</u>	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Carolina Wren	12/20, 24, 31	2	Colden	Wojewodzki
La. Waterthrush	<u>4/14</u>	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Pine Warbler	5/23-7/1	2	East Aurora	Ruhl
"	6/27	2 ad. 2 yng.	Bond Lake Park	Roberson
Fox Sparrow	10/21-30	1	Colden	Wojewodzki
White-cr. Sparrow	10/12,17	2	Machias	DeSha
"	10/25,27	1	Franklinville	DeSha
Pine Siskin	10/20-31	8 max.	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	10/26-30	1-3	Franklinville	DeSha
Evening Grosbeak	8/22,25	1	Lockport	Losito
"	10/25,26,30	1,2,1	Franklinville	DeSha



(cont from page 2) Finally, Peter Yoerg once again undertook the project of monitoring the fortunes of the small wintering population of Merlins on the South (Main Street) Campus of the University at Buffalo which was described in these pages last December. (See *Prothonotary*, Vol. 67:1, January, 2001, pp. 2-3). Between December 1, 2001 and January 4, 2002 he visited the campus ten times and observed the activities of the falcons still inhabiting the same roosts that they occupied last year, red pines bordering the area between Hayes Hall and the Clark Gymnasium. Yoerg's observations, mostly "around sunset" until dusk, indicated that four Merlins were actively engaged in pursuit of prey from late afternoon until early evening at which time they retired to separate roosts in the pines. He did not witness any prey capture. He concluded that all four Merlins were quite likely the same birds he saw in December, 2000 with their activities essentially unchanged. In a related incident, on December 9th, Yoerg was birding on the Old Lake Road in the Town of Porter in Niagara County when he witnessed a falcon, he identified as a Merlin, take a Redpoll from a fallow field near the road and fly to a nearby tree with its prey. The writer wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Bob Andrie, Willie D'Anna, Gerry Rising, Dave Suggs and Bill Watson in the preparation of this article.

### **Author, Author**

*by Gerry Rising*

It is a pleasant surprise when paging through the new National Audubon Society volume, *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior* (published by Alfred A. Knopf in 2001) to find that BOS member Alec Humann played a substantial role in writing this text. He wrote or co-authored almost one-seventh of this splendid volume.

On his own he wrote the essays on Shrikes, Chickadees and Titmice, Penduline Tits and Long-tailed Tits and with Edward S. Brinkley he contributed those on Loons, Grebes, Albatrosses, Shearwaters and Petrels, Storm Petrels, Frigatebirds, Boobies and Gannets, Pelicans, Cormorants, Darters and Frigatebirds. A very substantial contribution indeed.

Alec's author biography goes on to describe him as "a naturalist in the Buffalo, New York, region. He has worked as a raptor biologist at Cape May Bird Observatory, lectured on bird identification and conservation, conducted seasonal bird surveys, and led birding tours in the United States and Canada. He is currently working on a full revision of Beardslee and Mitchell's *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*."

Other regional authors (together with the sections they prepared) include Kevin McGowan of Cornell (Crows and Jays); Allison and Jeffrey Wells of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology (Pigeons and Doves; Tanagers); and Jim Rising of the University of Toronto (Bulbuls; Starlings and Mynas)

### **Judges Rule Mute Swan a Protected Species**

*by Bill Watson*

December 28, 2001, three judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that in the USA, Mute Swans are a protected species under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

According to the opinion filed by Circuit Judge Edwards, Joyce M. Hill claimed the federal government's "failure to protect Mute Swan under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act is causally linked to the diminished presence of the swan in and about her property... and the decline in Mute Swans reduces her aesthetic enjoyment of her property."

Judge Edwards pointed out that a 1995 Protocol (of the 1916 Migratory Bird Treaty Act between Canada and the United States) amended the definition of migratory birds to include "Anatidae," the family of birds that includes brant, ducks, geese and swans. Since the Mute Swan is a swan, the court ruled it is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Despite his finding, Judge Edwards' ruling admitted: "Mute Swans generally do not migrate long distances, making only short distance seasonal movements to find ice-free water. They are highly territorial and can treat other species with direct antagonism...Mute Swans occupy habitat and consume food used by migratory, endangered and threatened species...As an exotic and feral species, the Mute Swan's effects on native ecosystems are a concern. If uncontrolled, Mute Swans pose a serious threat to the ecological integrity of many areas, including the National Wildlife Refuge System and other Federal lands committed to the maintenance of natural wildlife diversity."

Certainly this decision will tie wildlife management's hands to some degree, in controlling the Mute Swan. There could be a hunting season on Mute Swans, but I am concerned that hunters, some of whom already shoot Tundra Swans confusing them with Snow Geese, will have even more difficulty separating Mute Swans from Tundra Swans and the occasional Trumpeter Swan. Perhaps the best solution is to follow Ontario's lead (where Mute Swans have been protected for quite some time) and control Mute Swans by reintroducing Trumpeter Swans.



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January (1-10), February (11-22), March (23-30), April (31-40), May (41-52), June (53-66), July (67-74), August (75-80), September (81-88), October (89-96), November (99-112), December (113-124).



# Nests Personally Documented in 2001

by Vivian Mills Pitzrick

5162 Amity Lake Road, Belmont, NY 14813, Allegany County

For Nest-Record Card Program  
Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY 14850

Species	No. Nests	Young Fledged	Remarks
Canada Goose	3	13	
Mourning Dove	2	0	P
Northern Flicker	1	?	Unknown Yg Fledged, no activity when revisited
Eastern Phoebe	2	4	
Eastern Kingbird	1	1	Possibly more young
Tree Swallow	58	163	Lost: D,1;W,2;Mouse,1;R,3;Not Revisited,8
Barn Swallow	1	3	
Black-capped Chickadee	3	0	P
House Wren	6	20	Lost: D,1;Bees,1
Eastern Bluebird	37	96	White eggs, 2 nests, 8 eggs; Lost:W,2;Des,2;R,2;Tr Sw,1; Unk P,2;
American Robin	6	6	Lost: P,4;
European Starling	5	2	Lost: H,4
Cedar Waxwing	1	0	D
House Sparrow	14	0	Eggs and nests destroyed by monitor
	140	308	

C=Colony, Colony counts as one nest; D=Deserted; EI=Empty Intact, H=Human; N=Nest; OS=Other Species; P=Predated; R=Raccoon; Unk=Unknown; W=Weather.

Total 2001: 14 Species, 140 nests

Total nests through 2000: 10,078

Total species documented through 2000: 107

Cumulative Total: 10,218 nests, 107 species (through 2001-No new species in 2001)

House Sparrow nests were destroyed after eggs were laid. This species again would not use the box with a Plexi-glass roof but Tree Swallows did. The latter would not use it until a 1 -inch strip of black paint was applied to the sides and front edges of the Plexiglass, leaving a clear area in the center. The weather was generally favorable for the nesting season, including an unusually dry and warm May.



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## February/March Calendar

**February-May: Hamburg Hawkwatch.** Join the hawkwatchers at Lakeside Memorial Park in Hamburg, NY. Observers will be present from early morning to late afternoon, weather permitting.

**February 13: BOS Meeting.** BOS compiler Mike Morgante will discuss filing of Noteworthy Records. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**February 27: BOS Meeting.** BOS member and bird bander Jerry Ferrell will present his latest banding results. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**March 13: BOS Meeting.** BOS President Terry Yonker will present a program on the Lake Erie Lakeside Management Plan. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**March 27: BOS Meeting.** Committee meetings and a business agenda. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**April 10: BOS Meeting.** 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**April 24: William C. Vaughan Lecture.** Dr. Sarah R. Morris (Canisius College Professor and BOS member) will present the lecture, *Gull Appreciation No. 101; an introduction to the fascinating biology of gulls* at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

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# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 68, No. 2 February, 2002

### THE MONTH: January

*by Mike Zebehazy*

Lake Erie remained unfrozen in January and given the weather events of late December, the expectation was for continued lake effect snow. That was not to be the case however, instead, we experienced one of the mildest Januarys on record. Temperatures were consistently above normal and precipitation was light. As a result, the record 44-inch snowpack was gone in Buffalo by the 27<sup>th</sup> without any flooding. However, the month ended with a major winter storm featuring snow, sleet, and freezing rain. Average temperature was 31.6 degrees [F], some seven degrees above normal, yet no records were set. Most of the month was quite dry. Precipitation totaled 3.54 inches but two inches of this fell on the final two days. Snowfall totaled 13.7 inches, almost half of which fell during the storm of the 29-30<sup>th</sup>.

Sunshine was limited as usual in January as just 27 percent (80 hours) of the possible was received. Normal is 28 percent. Yet for many it didn't seem so bad. That was due mainly to the five days that were mostly sunny. Three of those days came together from the 26-28<sup>th</sup> when golf replaced skiing.

The event of the month began early on the last day and extended into the first day of February. Extremely cold air over Canada was drawn southward as low pressure developed over the Tennessee Valley. Very warm air was drawn northward but the cold air hung stubbornly near the surface. This resulted in a

potpourri of precipitation beginning as snow then changing to an extended period of sleet and then freezing rain. Precipitation turned to rain during the night of Jan. 31 - Feb. 1 but remained freezing north of the city. Tremendous damage from falling trees and power lines resulted in the worst ice storm over areas north of Buffalo since 1976. Heavy rains caused creeks to rise as well. Temperatures finally warmed early on February 1 but damaging winds followed — quite an ending to an otherwise tranquil month. Also of note, the three-month period of November through January was the warmest such period in Buffalo in 70 years. [Data from National Weather Service Records]

Have you ever tried one of those quizzes found in some birding publications where you are asked to identify the location and time of year from a list of birds? How about one that includes the following: Turkey Vulture, Brant, Northern Shoveler, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Sandhill Crane, Common Snipe, Laughing Gull, Black-headed Gull, California Gull, Forster's Tern, Townsend's Solitaire, American Pipit, and Bohemian Waxwing. How many would guess Western New York and adjacent Ontario in January? We also had Red-throated Loons and a Red-necked Grebe; Wood Ducks, King Eiders, and a Harlequin Duck; a Black-legged Kittiwake, Snowy Owls and a Northern Saw-whet Owl; Red-headed Woodpeckers and the list (which includes some of the most sought after birds in the area) goes on. The variety of species seen in this region for the month has been remarkable.

Here is a more detailed look at some of those records. On January 12 Jeffrey Holbrook spotted the year's first Turkey Vulture in Elm Valley, about 3 miles east of Wellsville. Since TV's have become much more common in the area, people tend to shrug

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|----|--|
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them off. Jeff's verification was interesting because of what he says about his experience "banding" these birds. Since Turkey Vultures defecate on their legs, the band may get a build up of material causing problems for the bird. Rather than use the traditional bands he attached ribbons to their tails. Also, ribbons make for easy identification of soaring birds. Jeff did this as part of a study of nesting Wood Storks in South Carolina so losing the ribbons at molt was not a factor in the study.

The Mute Swan record reminded me that this species has recently been declared fully protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act making it much more difficult to control.

One suggestion for

control is to introduce Trumpeter Swans into areas where Mute Swans are a problem. To read more about what many perceive to be a nuisance species visit this web site: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/resshow/perry/muteswan.htm>. For the text of the actual decision that resulted in the inclusion of the Mute Swan under the MBTA visit this web site: <http://pacer.cadc.uscourts.gov/common/opinions/200112/00-5432a.txt>. Part of the opinion states, "In sum, the Secretary points to nothing in the statute, applicable treaties, or administrative record that justifies the exclusion of mute swans from the List of Migratory Birds."

Although the Harlequin Duck on the Niagara River did not require a written report it was significant by virtue of the fact that this was a "spectacular adult

male." Usually we see the bufflehead-like females in our region. This bird as well as a Black Scoter and a Ruddy Duck could be viewed from the parking lot of the West Side Rowing Club. Merlin numbers in the red pines on the University of Buffalo Main Street campus have increased to five. They have been found at this location for at least four years now. Peregrines are back in downtown Buffalo and it is hoped they will nest there again.

Sandhill Cranes are observed more and more frequently in the BOS regions but usually during spring migration; January, however, held a real surprise. Many observers were able to view a flock of twelve bustle-bottoms between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in the town of Pomfret near Fredonia. Through January 7<sup>th</sup> the big birds were in a cornfield off Farel Road but on the 12<sup>th</sup> they relocated not far away on Berry Road. The Laughing Gull in Dunkirk Harbor continues the irregular winter occurrence of this species at that location. The Black-headed Gull was reported again this month in the gorge below Niagara Falls. Meanwhile, the California Gull continued its stay at the Robert Moses Power Plant and lower Niagara River where it is most often observed from the parking area at the Sir Adam Beck Generating Station in Ontario. Perhaps this bird will continue into early spring if we are lucky.

The bird of the season, the Townsend's Solitaire continued through the month at the Bond Lake site in Niagara County. This somewhat elusive bird was sometimes spotted within minutes yet could be completely missed after hours of searching. Some birders who drove up from Long Island and stayed for two days never did find it. Also regularly seen at the Bond Lake site was a flock of up to 11 Pine Grosbeaks, a species not recorded here in January for about 10 years. Bohemian Waxwings were at the north entrance to Fort Niagara State Park in the crabapple trees and also sitting conspicuously in bare deciduous trees nearby. Fort Niagara was also the spot where Red-headed Woodpeckers have been found from time to time this winter in the open oak grove across the road from the large mound. Finally, the Oregon race Dark-eyed Junco continued to be observed throughout the month at a backyard feeding station in Eden. This bird has been around since last November and is likely the same bird that was at this site a year ago.

*(The Month, continued on page 19)*



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	1;27	8;2	Wilson	Klick; Morgante
"	13	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16	1	Shadigee	Klick
"	16	1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Klick
Common Loon	1	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Rew, Walker
"	1	20	Wilson	Klick et al
"	15	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Klick, Yoerg
"	16	1	Golden Hill S.P.	Klick
Pied-billed Grebe	1,5	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	3,21	1,1	Buffalo Harbor	Klick
"	12	8	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	12	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Klick, Harris
Horned Grebe	4;12	1;1	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles; Rew
"	19	29	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	Sturgeon Point	Klick, Harris
Red-necked Grebe	14;16	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna; Klick
D.-crested Cormorant	3;7	119;83	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick; Watson
"	5;27	1;1	Wilson	S&T O'Donnell; Morgante
"	15	8	Niagara Falls	Klick, Yoerg
Great Blue Heron	20	27	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Andrle, Thill
Black-cr. Night-Heron	2,15	1;3	Buffalo	Yoerg; D'Anna
"	6	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Turkey Vulture	<u>12</u>	1	Elm Valley	Holbrook
"	<u>27</u>	1	Lewiston	Morgante
Brant	<u>1</u>	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	K. Landau, et al
"	<u>1</u>	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	D'Anna, Klick
Mute Swan	1	5	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Rew, Rising
"	2	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
"	4	1	Carlton	Klick, Harris
"	6	1	Wilson	S&T O'Donnell
"	8	2	Windmill Pt., Ont.	Klick
"	19;20	3	Olcott	D'Anna; S&T O'Donnell
"	21,27	1,1	Barcelona Harbor	Klick, Harris
Tundra Swan	1	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	Wojewodzki
"	17	228	Upper Niagara River	Burch
Wood Duck	1;5	4;5	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Rising; Holmes
"	5;15;26	3;6;3	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna; Klick; D'Anna
"	12	1	Silver Creek	Rew, Horbett
"	27	1	Wilson-Tusc. S.P.	Morgante
Northern Shoveler	<u>6</u>	2	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Klick
"	<u>8</u>	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
Northern Pintail	1	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes

<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	5	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna
Green-winged Teal	20,26	2,1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
Ring-necked Duck	12	6	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Klick, Harris
"	20	23	Fort Erie, Ont.	Potter, D'Anna
"	21	34	Buffalo Harbor	Klick
Lesser Scaup	1	3	Niagara Falls	Rising et al
"	26	386	Beaver Is. S.P.	Klick
King Eider	20;25	1	Vineland, Ont.	D'Anna; Klick
"	27	1 imm. male	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Morgante
Harlequin Duck	19-27	1 ad. male	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Morgante; many observers
Surf Scoter	1;27	1;2	Wilson	D'Anna; Morgante
"	27	3	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Morgante
Black Scoter	6	1	Port Weller, Ont.	D'Anna, Harris, Klick
"	<u>19</u>	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Morgante; Watson
Long-tailed Duck	16	1600	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Klick
Hooded Merganser	12	22	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	20	32	Tonawanda	Andrle, Thill
Ruddy Duck	1	2	Buffalo Harbor	Rising et al
"	7;21;28	2;4;1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson; Klick; Yoerg
Bald Eagle	2;26	1;1	Queenston, Ont.	Bellerby; D'Anna
"	4,27	3 imm.	Navy Island	Burke
"	13	2	Olean	LeBlanc, DeSha, Baird
"	13	2 ad.	Salamanca	LeBlanc, DeSha, Baird
"	13;27	1;3	Allegheny Reservoir	LeBlanc et al
"	19	1	Sheridan	Klick, Harris
"	19	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	S&T O'Donnell
"	20	9 (4ad ,5 imm.)	Navy Island	Murr, Bajurny
"	26	3	Beaver Is. S.P.	Klick
Red-shouldered Hawk	27	1	Celeron	Klick, Harris
Rough-legged Hawk	6;25	1;2	South Dayton	Wojewodzki; Rew
"	13	1	Randolph	LeBlanc et al
"	19	1	Yates	D'Anna
"	19	1	Arkwright	Klick, Harris
"	26	4	Stevensville, Ont.	K&J Landau
Merlin	<u>2;3</u>	1;1	Buffalo (UB)	Klick; D'Anna
"	<u>4-31</u>	5 max.	Buffalo (UB)	Yoerg
"	<u>13</u>	1	Queenston, Ont.	Klick
Peregrine Falcon	<u>2</u>	1	Buffalo	Klick
"	<u>17;27</u>	2	Buffalo (City Hall)	D'Anna; Broderick
Wild Turkey	25	112 (flock)	Arkwright	Rew
American Coot	7	112	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson et al
"	19	1	Olcott	D'Anna, Potter
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	3	12	Pomfret	D'Anna, Klick
"	4,6	12	Pomfret	Rew
"	6	12	Pomfret	K. Landau, Wojewodzki
"	7	12	Pomfret	Galas, Watson, Rising
"	12	12	Pomfret	DeLeon
Killdeer	9	1	Amherst	Klick
Common Snipe	<u>19</u>	1	Gerry	Klick
<u>Laughing Gull</u>	3	1	Dunkirk Harbor	D'Anna, Klick



<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	6	1	Dunkirk Harbor	K.Landau, Wojewodzki, Rew
Little Gull	1	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Rew, Walker
"	3,18	1,2	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	15	1	Niagara Falls	Yoerg
"	19	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Morgante
"	21	3	Lewiston	Galas, Watson
<u>Black-headed Gull</u>	7	1	Niagara Falls	Ewald
"	13	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Klick
Bonaparte's Gull	3,25	11740,13300	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
<u>California Gull</u>	5,20,26	1	Adam Beck Hydro,Ont.	D'Anna
"	8	1	Adam Beck Hydro,Ont.	Klick
"	13	1	Lewiston	Galas, Rising
"	13	1	Devil's Hole S.P.	D'Anna, Klick
Iceland Gull	6	8	Adam Beck Hydro,Ont.	Klick et al
"	16	1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Klick
Lesser Black-b. Gull	1	5	Niagara Falls	Rising et al
"	28	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Yoerg
Glaucous Gull	1	4	Adam Beck Hydro,Ont.	Rising et al
"	7	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rising et al
Great Black-b. Gull	2	18	Batavia	Klick, Harris
Black-leg. Kittiwake	2	1	Buffalo Harbor	D'Anna
Forster's Tern	<u>1;2</u>	1	Buffalo Harbor	Rising, Galas; Klick
Snowy Owl	11;19;26	1	Niag. Falls Airport	D'Anna; O'Donnells; Landau
"	30	1	Porter	Klick, Harris
Long-eared Owl	13;20	2;1	Porter	D'Anna; S&T O'Donnell
"	13	1	Somerset	S&T O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl 30	3	Porter	Klick, Harris	
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	20	1	West Almond	Klick, Harris
Red-headed Wdpkr.	1	3	Fort Niagara S.P.	Rising et al
"	14	1	Porter	Galas et al
Northern Shrike	3,9,11	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	5-7;12;20	1;1;1	Pomfret	several observers;Moshers
"	12	1	West Seneca	Klick, Harris
"	12	3	Olcott to Kuckville	Ewald
Common Raven	20	2	Allegany S.P.	Klick, Harris
"	20	1	Salamanca	Klick, Harris
"	27	1	Bush Hill S.F.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	2	Yorkshire	Yoerg, Henderson
Carolina Wren	1-31	2	Lancaster	Morgante
"	3	1	Lake Erie S.P.	Klick
"	12	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Klick, Harris
"	22	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	29	2	Tift N.P.	Watson
Winter Wren	1,12	1	Porter	D'Anna et al
Eastern Bluebird	1;27	8;4	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Rising; Morgante
"	4	6	Newfane	Klick, Harris
"	5	15	East Aurora	Rising
"	5	5	Orchard Park	Klick
"	14	6	Porter	Galas et al
"	28	2	Cambria	Galas et al

<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
<u>Townsend's Solitaire</u>	11	1	Bond Lake Park	Klick
"	12	1	Bond Lake Park	Watson
"	18	1	Bond Lake Park	D'Anna
"	21,22	1	Bond Lake Park	Galas et al
Hermit Thrush	1;28	1;1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	D'Anna; Klick
"	3	1	Lake Erie S.P.	Klick et al
Gray Catbird	1	1	Porter	D'Anna et al
"	2	1	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
Northern Mockingbird	21	1	Farmersville	D'Anna, Potter
"	24	1	South Park, Bflo.	Klick
American Pipit	<u>4</u>	1	Elba	Klick
<u>Bohemian Waxwing</u>	1	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	D'Anna, Klick
"	7	5	Olcott	Ewald
Yellow-r. Warbler	3	5	Lake Erie S.P.	Klick et al
Chipping Sparrow	5	1	Chautauqua (f)	Mosher, Farver
Swamp Sparrow	2	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
"	5	2	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	13	2	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	21	1	Almond	Klick, Harris
White-cr. Sparrow	1	1	Lewiston	Klick et al
"	3	8	Pomfret	Klick et al
Dark-eyed Junco				
<u>J. h. oreganus</u>	1-31	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
Lapland Longspur	4	1	Yates	Klick, Harris
"	19	1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
Snow Bunting	4	50	Newfane	Klick, Harris
"	19	30	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
Red-w. Blackbird	1	4	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	1	1	Chippawa, Ont.	Rising et al
"	2	2	Darien(f)	Klick, Harper
"	3	1	Lake Erie S.P.	Klick
"	13	1	Porter	Klick et al
"	22	1	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
"	28	1	Tonawanda	Watson
"	29	5	Tifft N.P.	Watson
Rusty Blackbird	6,13	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Common Grackle	6	1	Portland	Rew
"	26	1	Tonawanda	Klick
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	2	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	1	1	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Galas et al
"	2	2	Darien(f)	Klick, Harper
"	3,16;26	6,9;35	Tonawanda	Galas; Klick
"	6	8	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Klick et al
"	27	5	Randolph	LeBlanc et al
Pine Grosbeak	2-18	11 max.	Bond Lake Park	Watson, D'Anna, Galas
"	4	8	Somerset	Klick, Harris
Purple Finch	6	2	Elma(f)	Collins
"	10	1	Boston	Klick
Red Crossbill	20	8	Phillips Creek S.F.	Klick, Harris
White-w. Crossbill	6	1	Elma(f)	Collins
"	27	2	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Morgante
Common Redpoll	2	9	Lockport	Klick, Harris



<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	5	1	Orchard Park	Watson
"	10	55	Pomfret	Mosher
"	16	2	Shadigee	Klick
"	18	40	Bond Lake Park	D'Anna
"	21	8	Evangola S.P.	Klick, Harris
Pine Siskin	1-31	52 max.	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	2	10	Darien(f)	Klick, Harper
"	6	2	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Klick et al
"	10	24	Boston	Klick
"	21	1	Jamestown	Klick, Harris

Also observed this month: Canada Goose, Gadwall, American Black Duck, Mallard, Canvasback, Redhead, Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper’s Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Eastern Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-Breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Total for the year 2002:</b>	<b>130</b>

Statisticians’ Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Mike Morgante, 16 Lakeside Crescent, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086 (email: Morgmmm@AOL.com).

<u>Thayer’s Gull</u>	13	1	Adam Beck Hydro,Ont.	Klick
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*(The Month, continued from page 14)*

For some reason, January brings thoughts of extinction. Recently, the Department of the Interior has declared the Mariana Mallard and the Guam Broadbill extinct. The great search for the “extinct” Ivory-billed Woodpecker began on the 17<sup>th</sup> in the Pearl River Wildlife Management Area in Louisiana. The team sponsored by Zeiss Sports Optics became very excited when on the 27<sup>th</sup> they made a sound recording of what they believe (perhaps hope is a better word at this time) was the loud rapping of the bird. A different research group from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology placed 12 sound recording devices in the same tract where they will remain for 60 days. They hope to gather acoustic evidence that will verify the existence of this high profile species. And now some scientists are trying to clone the Dodo and others the Great Auk. Many feel this is a biological impossibility; yet, in my mind, this is a much nobler endeavor than creating extras of the neighbor’s cat.

So with all this bird science occurring how about doing your part locally by helping out at the Hamburg Hawk Watch, for example. Jim Landau is coordinating the BOS efforts this year under the guidance of Fran Rew. Lend a hand from March 1 through April any day of the week that weather permits. Prime time is between 10AM and 2PM.

(Some parts of this article were distilled from postings on various listservers on the Internet. Thanks to all who contribute.)



## A 2002 Big January

by Brendan Klick

Last year, Don Harris and I attempted to find one hundred bird species in January and we both tallied 106 by the month's end. In so doing we were following the precedent set by birders such as Dick Collins, Mike Galas, Gerry Rising, and Willie D'Anna (see *The Prothonotary*, Vol. 55, No. 2 and Vol. 57, No. 3). This January Don Harris, Willie D'Anna, and I tried to repeat the process, this time hoping to set a new January record for the region. And we did just that. Don had 128 species, I had 127, and Willie had 114.

With December unseasonably warm, we had hopes of a high species count in January. But with heavy snowfalls at the end of December we wondered if "half hearties" would remain. We could only hope they would. On January 1, Willie, Don, and I started out at 6:00 a.m. calling a Screech Owl at Fort Niagara and then added a Great Horned Owl at dawn. Birds flying over Lake Ontario in Wilson included Surf Scoter, Common and Red-throated Loon. At Four Mile Creek State Park, we ticked Hermit Thrush and Swamp Sparrow but did not relocate the Phoebe seen just a few days earlier by Willie. We then continued on to a spot where Don had staked out Winter Wren, Swamp Sparrow, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. We added Winter Wren, missed Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Swamp Sparrow but added a surprise Gray Catbird. On to the Townsend's Solitaire at Bond Lake. When we arrived there, Bill Broderick informed us that he had seen two Bohemian Waxwings and a Brant at Fort Niagara. We rushed to Fort Niagara where we had the Brant and a Bohemian Waxwing. Returning to Bond Lake we learned that Dick Collins' party had a Forster's Tern in the Buffalo Harbor but we did not find the Townsend's Solitaire.

On the second, Don and I went to Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant and Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge looking for the Snow Geese, Common Yellowthroat, Green-winged Teal, and Northern Shrike we had a week before. We found none but did add Mute Swan, Red-winged Blackbird and Brown-headed Cowbird at Tom Harper's feeder. We drove to Buffalo Harbor hoping for Forster's Tern. Sure enough, Don spotted a distant white speck flying near the outer breakwater. It was the tern. Willie went to the spot later in the day and missed the tern but had a Black-legged Kittiwake. Don later got the kittiwake but I missed it.

On the third, Willie, Don, and I chased the 12 Sandhill Cranes west of Dunkirk. After enjoying the cranes, we stopped at Dunkirk Harbor. We added the

usual birds there: Horned and Pied-billed Grebes and Double-crested Cormorant. However, we were very surprised to see a small, dark-mantled gull that Don realized was a Laughing Gull! We had great looks as the bird flew in to be fed by a person with bread. That night Don and I learned that a Rochester Birder had three American Pipits on the east side of Route 98 in Elba. This was just outside our region but the birds could be crossing the road. The next day despite high winds we were able to add an American Pipit as it briefly flew to the west side of Route 98.

Things were going great but would the birds continue to cooperate. They did on the sixth. We managed to find two Northern Shovelers, a Black Scoter, a Northern Pintail, a Green-winged Teal, and four Wood Ducks. On the eighth, I added the California Gull at the Robert Moses Power Plant, on the ninth, a Killdeer, on the tenth, the elusive Townsend's Solitaire, and on the twelve, a Northern Shrike. Our luck continued on the thirteenth. We added Long-eared Owl and Snowy Owl, found the Black-headed Gull in the Niagara Gorge, added a surprise Rusty Blackbird at Dufferin Island, and located the California Gull for Don who had yet to see it. That week we added Red-necked Grebe in the Niagara River originally found by Kayo Roy and Black-crowned Night Herons found earlier by Peter Yoerg who followed up a Dial-a-Bird report. The herons were roosting in a large spruce tree in the City of Buffalo. Don and Willie were finally successful in finding the Solitaire.

Don and I used the long weekend of the 19<sup>th</sup> through 21<sup>st</sup> to find key Southern Tier specialties. By staying in a hotel in Warren, Pennsylvania, we were able to bird the Southern Tier counties intensely. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, we added Common Raven in Arkwright, Rough-legged Hawk in South Dayton, Bald Eagle in Hanover and Common Snipe in Gerry thanks to Bob Sundell who has always given us great tips. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, we started at 4:00 a.m. looking for Barred Owl in Allegany State Park. Just before sunrise we finally induced one to call. Then, it was on to Allegany County where we added Red Crossbills at Phillips Creek State Forest. However, we hoped to find White-winged Crossbill and Evening Grosbeak. We had a brief look at a crossbill that was likely a white-winged but neither of us could be sure so we added no grosbeaks. However, at nightfall, we had an exciting experience when we called in an agitated Northern Saw-whet Owl, which flew overhead by no more than a few feet. We realized that there is much suitable habitat in the Allegany County for this species and that it may be rather numerous in the Southern Tier, at least in the winter. The next day I added Ruffed



Grouse but we still did not find any White-winged Crossbill or grosbeaks.

Meanwhile, Willie and many other birders had enjoyed the gorgeous Harlequin Duck in the Buffalo Harbor and the King Eider in Vineland, Ontario. Both birds lingered and we added them to our list during the week. Don and I both serendipitously found Common Grackles. Not many possibilities remained. I was at 125 species; Don 126. For the last weekend of the month, there were few reports of interest. However, Bob Sundell had just learned of a Red-shouldered Hawk in the Jamestown suburb of Celeron. On the last Sunday of January we added the Red-shouldered Hawk, which was exactly where Bob said it would be. With a warm south wind, we went to the Ripley Hawk Watch to look for migrant Turkey Vultures without luck. However, when we arrived home, we learned that Mike Morgante had found both White-winged Crossbills and Turkey Vulture that day. Willie had added the White-winged Crossbill. It seemed that we were out of possibilities. However, we decided to take one last look for the Short-eared Owls on Dickersonville Road. We had already looked for the birds three times so our chances seemed unlikely. However, at 4:30 p.m., we spotted a distant bird that did not appear to be flying like a harrier. I turned out to be a Short-eared Owl. It was Don's 128<sup>th</sup> bird, and my 127<sup>th</sup>.

From last year's Big January, we missed Northern Goshawk, Eastern Towhee, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet, which was no surprise. More disappointing was missing birds reported by others during the month: Turkey Vulture, Northern Gannet, Black-legged Kittiwake, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Chipping Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, White-winged Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak.

As Gerry Rising mentioned in his Big January Report, the value of listing is debatable. Despite the many arguments for and against the merits of listing, I find that January listing motivates me to explore remote parts of the B.O.S. study area at a bleak time of year and is a fantastic means of learning about winter bird life.

I would like to thank all who helped our effort by informing us of recent bird reports: Bill Broderick, Ray Budniewski, Bill Burch, Tom Burke, Ken Cohen, Dick Collins, Bob DeLeon, Kurt Fox, Brett Ewald, Mike Galas, Tom Harper, Hans Kunze, Jim Landau, Tom LeBlanc, Dick Miga, Mike Morgante, Terry Moshers, Betsy Potter, Gerry Rising, Dick Rosche, Kayo Roy, Gail Seamans, Dave Suggs, Bob Sundell, Dave Tetlow, Bill Watson, Jim Wojewodzki, Peter Yoerg, and any others I may have missed.

# The 73<sup>nd</sup> BOS Christmas Bird Count

by Bill Bogacki

The Christmas Count was conducted in relatively pleasant, overcast weather on December 16, 2001. Thirty-eight participants counted in the Buffalo circle, recording 73 species and 48,079 individuals in 16 territories.

Census Area: Centering on Grand Island including both branches of the Niagara River and adjacent territory.

Weather: The morning and afternoon were overcast. Temperatures ranged from a morning low of 30 °F to an afternoon high of 36 °F. Winds were from the east ranging from 5-10 m.p.h. The Niagara River was free of ice. Snow cover was 1-3 inches.

Coverage: 38 observers in 17 parties made observations from 5:15 am to 4:30 pm. Party hours were 129.25 (47.5 on foot and 81.75 by car), plus 1.5 hours at feeders and 8.75 hours owling. Party miles were 764 (49.5 by foot and 714.5 by car).

## Species (and number of individuals) recorded:

Common Loon	2
Double-crested Cormorant	8
Great Blue Heron	28
Tundra Swan	86
Greater Scaup	3554
Canada Goose	3772
Wood Duck	1
Green-winged Teal	3
American Black Duck	90
Mallard	3124
Gadwall	40
American Wigeon	56
Canvasback	743
Redhead	7
Greater Scaup	673
Lesser Scaup	21
White-winged Scoter	1
Common Goldeneye	1579
Bufflehead	376
Hooded Merganser	28
Common Merganser	89
Red-breasted Merganser	6
duck sp.	22
Sharp-shinned Hawk	11
Cooper's Hawk	9
Red-tailed Hawk	90



Am. Kestrel	23
Wild Turkey	9
American Coot	29
Bonaparte's Gull	211
Ring-billed Gull	7352
Herring Gull	14073
Iceland Gull	4
Lesser Black-backed Gull	6
Great Black-backed Gull	447
Rock Dove	2114
Mourning Dove	660
Eastern Screech Owl	14
Great Horned Owl	12
Long-eared Owl	14
Belted Kingfisher	3
Red-headed Woodpecker	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	23
Downy Woodpecker	100
Hairy Woodpecker	19
Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker	14
Blue Jay	439
Am. Crow	1471
Black-capped Chickadee	407
Tufted Titmouse	27
Red-breasted Nuthatch	27
White-breasted Nuthatch	53
Brown Creeper	16
Carolina Wren	7
Winter Wren	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	13
Eastern Bluebird	5
American Robin	61
Northern Mockingbird	5
Cedar Waxwing	143
Northern Shrike	2
European Starling	6996
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
Northern Cardinal	158
American Tree Sparrow	103
Song Sparrow	3
Swamp Sparrow	7
White-throated Sparrow	7
White-crowned Sparrow	1
Dark-eyed Junco ( <i>J. hyemalis</i> )	141
Red-winged Blackbird	2
Brown-headed Cowbird	42
House Finch	345
American Goldfinch	176
House Sparrow	1427

**TERRITORIES & OBSERVERS:** (Names of section compilers are printed in boldface.)

- A. Canada: Rainbow Bridge south to the Welland River and the Niagara River west to M.C.R.R., Portage road and area boundary. **Willie D'Anna**, Mike Morgante, Betsy Potter. 58 species; 17,876 individuals.
- B. Canada: Welland River south to Black Creek and the Niagara River west to the QEW and area boundary. **Ed Crohn**, Mary Ann Stegmeier, Paul Ziebarth, Virginia Ziebarth. 23 species; 1957 individuals.
- C. Canada: QEW west to area boundary and south to Bowen Road. **Mike Hamilton**. 31 species; 3467 individuals.
- D. Canada: Black Creek south to the Peace Bridge and the Niagara River west to the QEW. **Frances Rew**, Audrey Horbett. 29 species; 2143 individuals.
- E. Canada: Bowen Road south to area boundary and east to the QEW and the Niagara River. **Drew Campbell**, Brad Clements, Blayne Farnam, Jean Farnam, Kayo Roy. 31 species; 2129 individuals.
- F. Niagara Falls: Porter Road, Hyde Park Boulevard, Pine Avenue and Main Street south to the Niagara River, including Goat Island, Cayuga Island east to Military Road. **Lynne Landon**, Terry Yonker. 29 species; 5258 individuals.
- G. North Tonawanda: Military Road southwest to the New York State Barge Canal and Niagara River and northeast to the area boundary. **Don Roberson**, Robert Andrie, Tim Simon, Joe Thill. 36 species; 1688 individuals.
- H. Tonawanda: Sheridan Drive north to the New York State Barge Canal and Niagara River and east to the area boundary. **Gerry Rising**, Mike Galas, Bill Watson. 31 species; 1521 individuals.
- J. Buffalo: Sheridan Drive east and south to the area boundary and west to the Niagara River. **Don Brasure**. 16 species; 1391 individuals.
- K. Grand Island: West of Stony Point Road, north of Huth and Long Roads to the Niagara River. **Robert Wagner**, John Filor. 41 species; 1278 individuals.
- L. Grand Island: Huth and Long Roads south to Whitehaven Road and Stony Point Road and west to the Niagara River. **Bill Burch**, Olive Burch. 27 species; 749 individuals.
- M. Grand Island: East of Stony Point Road and north of Whitehaven Road to the Niagara River. **Mike Zebe-hazy**. 36 species; 1491 individuals.
- N. Grand Island: Whitehaven Road south to Love Road and Baseline Road west to the Niagara River. **Brendan Klick**, Don Harris. 34 species; 608 individuals.
- O. Grand Island: Whitehaven Road south to Love Road and Baseline Road east to the Niagara River. **Jim Landau**, Karen Landau. 24 species; 913 individuals.
- P. Grand Island: Love Road south to Spaulding Road from the East Branch to the West Branch of the Niagara River. **Doug Happ**, Hoe Hobby, Pat Martin. 38 species; 1343 individuals.
- Q. Grand Island: South of Spaulding Road to the Niagara River. **Bill Bogacki**, Ed Ratajczak, Dennis Russel. 30 species; 1574 individuals.



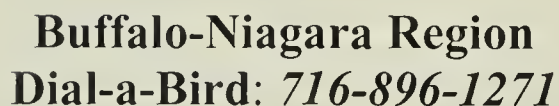
	Body	Tail	Wing	Head	Underparts	Flight	Behavior
<b>Sharp-shinned Hawk</b>	Narrow, stubby. Equal to length of tail A flying mallet of wings and tail	Tip usually squared Terminal band is narrow, soiled, not white and hard to see. <b>Straight Sharpie</b> <b>Soiled Sharpie</b>	Short, broad and very round at tip. The leading edge has the wrist projecting or pushing forward. The trailing edges shows an "S" curve.	Appears to be pulled back since wings are pushed forward.  <b>Shrugging Sharpie</b>	<b>Immature:</b> Chest and belly have thick noodle-like streaking. Looks dirty at distance. <b>Adult:</b> Rusty barring on chest and belly.	Flapping and gliding where flaps are hurried and snappy. Too rapid to count.  <b>Snappy Sharpie</b>	Travels from 1's to groups of up to about 8. Feisty, agitator, intimidator.
<b>Cooper's Hawk</b>	Large version of Sharpie. Body appears shorter than tail. <b>A flying Cross.</b>	Long with tip generally rounded. Terminal band can be broad, white and easy to see. <b>Curved</b> <b>Cooper's</b> <b>Crisp Cooper's</b>	The wing is rather long and straight-edged with little or no bend at the wrist.	Large and heavy. Protrudes forward of the wing, as a turtle's extended head so eye is well forward.  <b>Crossing Cooper's</b>	<b>Immature:</b> Only the chest has thick noodle-like streaking. Looks white or clean at a distance. <b>Adult:</b> Rusty barring on chest.	Countable flapping and gliding where flaps are stiff and determined. <b>Casual Cooper's</b>	Solitary birds usually not traveling in pairs or groups. Soars high with other raptors with fully extended wings.
<b>Northern Goshawk</b>	Buteo size and shape. Tubular. Cylindrical.	Broad and wide at base. Appears as extension of body.	Leading edge almost straight. Trailing edge like Sharpie's 'S' curve.	Fist-shaped, large and broad. White supercilium visible. <b>Adult:</b> Black eye stripe.	<b>Immature:</b> washed buffy, heavy noodle-shaped streaking on breast to base of tail. <b>Adult:</b> Pale gray barring.	Wing beat is heavy, deep labored like a buteo. A flying tube.	Accipiter looking like a buteo. Beware of immature Red-shouldered hawk.
<b>American Kestrel</b>	Killdeer-sized. Dainty and delicate. Strong back curving of the wings and tuck of the head gives a flying banana look. Female slightly, but not noticeably, larger than male.	<b>Male:</b> Bright rufous tail with a broad, dark band near the tip. <b>Female:</b> Reddish brown, overlaid with dark, broken barring. No dark tip.	Soft, curving wing; swept back; sickle-shaped; like a "flying banana". <b>Male:</b> Blue above. Trailing edge has line of white dots termed "necklace". <b>Female:</b> Reddish above. Necklace of buffy dots.	Vertical "slash-marks" on both side of the face look like a <b>mustache and sideburn.</b>	<b>Adult:</b> Very pale. Lightly streaked and spotted, especially on the sides. <b>Immature:</b> Similar to adult with more heavy streaking below.	Light, lively, flutery, wandering. Accipiter like quality. On calm days flight behavior similar to Sharpie's flap-flap-glide. Glides more often than Merlin and Peregrine. Battered about by moderate winds.	Travels in 1's and 2-'s to loose groups of about 10. Eats dragonflies while flying. In a strong wind bounces like a cork on rough water.
<b>Merlin</b>	Athletic, slender, and powerful. <b>Male:</b> larger than Kestrel. Bright metallic blue above. <b>Female and Immature:</b> Larger than pigeon. <b>Chocolate falcon.</b>	<b>Male:</b> Dark blue tail shows several pencil-thin, blue-gray bands. <b>Female:</b> Dark brown tail shows many pencil-thin buffy bands.	Longer and broader than kestrel. Broad isosceles triangle-shaped with sharply pointed tips.	Mustache mark is faint, blurred, ambiguous, and vague.	Fine to heavy streaking. <b>Male:</b> Finely streaked below. <b>Female:</b> Heavy streaking below with contrasting white throat and buffy undertail coverts.	Point-to-point flight is direct and consistent. Does not wander nor is altered by wind. Wing beats are quick and continuous with short strokes Power in downstroke. "Pigeon" flight.	Its demeanor is irritating, galling, and bothersome. Usually solitary.
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>	Medium to large with wide range between sexes. Heavy and broad. <b>Adult:</b> Blue-gray above <b>Immature:</b> Brown back	Fairly long- and broad-tailed falcon. When fully spread it forms a semicircle that nearly touches the trailing edge of wing.	Extremely long-winged falcon. Wide base triangle-shape. Look like tapered candles when soaring. Underwing always uniform spotted and barred.	<b>All individuals</b> have a bold, distinct mustache mark. <b>Immature:</b> Blond crown and nape.	<b>Adult:</b> Heavily barred below, with a gleaming white upper chest and throat. <b>Immature:</b> Heavily streaked, with a buff-colored chest and throat.	Wing beat is fluid, rhythmic, elastic, and whip-like. Rhythm and timing are similar to a Common Loon.	Solitary in migration. Can be confused with the Northern Harrier which has longer wings and tail.



	Body	Tail	Wing	Head	Underparts	Flight	Behavior
Osprey	<b>Adults and Immatures:</b> Similar in appearance; with distinctive black and white patterned plumage and distinctive gull-shape.	<b>Adult:</b> Lack a narrow white border on the tip of the tail. <b>Immature:</b> Have a narrow white border on the tip of the tail.	<b>Adult:</b> Long and gull-shaped with more dark mottling on the underwing. <b>Immature:</b> Long and gull-shaped with thin white trailing edge border.	Dark eye stripe separates the white crown from the white throat.	Body and wing linings are creamy white. Flight feathers are uniformly dark.	Soars on long and lanky crooked wings. Wings bend up above horizontal plane and then downward at wrist. Beat is stiff, arthritic.	Looks like a gull. Uses thermals and updrafts.
Northern Harrier	Long, lean, lanky, medium size. White rump patch. <b>Male:</b> Silver gray above, white below. <b>Female:</b> Tawny above, buffy with brown streaks on sides below. <b>Immature:</b> Chocolate-rust above. Orange to cinnamon below. No streaking.	Long and narrow. Proportionately longest tail of all North American raptors.	Long and narrow. Bold dihedral. Attitude may be pointed (falcon) or blunt (buteo). <b>Male:</b> Underwing shows inky-black tips and trailing edge.	<b>Immature:</b> Head is dark; appearing hooded. <b>Adult Male:</b> Silver-gray head with black eye-line. <b>Adult Female:</b> Similar pattern as immature but not as dark.	<b>Male:</b> White <b>Female:</b> Buffy with brown streaking on belly and sides. <b>Immature:</b> Cinnamon to mahogany to rust color.	Rock unsteadily in a wind, easily buffeted like a ship on a wave. Wing beat loping and regular; emphatic snap to downward stroke. <b>Best clue:</b> unique cadence.	Migrates as singles to about five birds. Flight path is usually single file.
Bald Eagle	Immense size in all age classes. <b>Adult:</b> Dark, almost black. Distinctive. <b>1<sup>st</sup> year:</b> Chocolate, almost black, speckled with dirty white; mottling varies and is age related. <b>2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year:</b> Large areas of white mottling are present on the belly and back.	Important field mark; white to dark.	In soar, uniformly wide — slab-like; held horizontal and straight. <b>Adult:</b> Dark, almost black. <b>Immature:</b> Speckled with dirty white; mottling varies and is age related. <b>1<sup>st</sup> year:</b> White limited to underwing linings and appears as	Head and bill are massive. <b>Adult:</b> White. <b>Immature:</b> Dark. <b>Wing (continued)</b> broad white line at leading edge area. Wing pits white. <b>2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year:</b> Underwing patches generously white.	Great variation. <b>Adult:</b> Dark. <b>Other ages:</b> Various amounts of white on belly, wings, and tail.	Steady, stately, deliberate, even-keeled and not stiff. Beat is slow, robust, deeply arched — high on upstroke.	Flap continuously or — seemingly never.
Golden Eagle	Large and dark, similar in appearance and shape to immature Bald Eagle. <b>Adult:</b> Dark brown. <b>Immature:</b> Dark.	<b>Adult:</b> Trace of white feathering may be present at base of tail. <b>Immature:</b> White tail broadly edged with a dark terminal band.	Long, broad slab-like wing similar to Bald Eagle. <b>Adult:</b> Lacks white wing patches. <b>Immature:</b> Brilliant white wing patches are large and obvious. Appear as <b>car headlights</b> .	Head and bill are small. Crown and nape blond or pale gold in all plumages.	Uniformly dark except for flight feathers and tail.	Wing beat slow and ponderous. Shallower wing beat than the deep arching beat of the Bald Eagle. Like slow, gliding, and distant single turkey vulture.	Travels individually or in groups of two to three.
Turkey Vulture	Uniformly dark black. Sexes are similar.	Broad, usually not spread.	Bold, dihedral. Long, broad, deeply slotted tips. Flight feathers silver with underwing coverts and leading edge black.	Diminutive, Lilliputian, miniscule, tiny! <b>Adult:</b> Red with yellow bill. <b>Immature:</b> Dull gray with gray bill.	Two-toned. Uniformly dark black except flight feathers are silvery.	Long tail and no head. Rocks in flight like a tight-rope walker.	Gregarious. Glider. Flaps wings infrequently. Singles can be confused with Golden Eagle.



	Body	Tail	Wing	Head	Underparts	Flight	Behavior
Red-tailed hawk	<b>Adults and Immatures:</b> are similar in plumage — brown to gray-brown above and light below, with varying amounts of speckling and streaking. They do differ in tail color. Light and dark-phase birds.	<b>Adult:</b> Have a variably red-colored tail that is acquired during the second year. <b>Immature:</b> Have finely barred brown tails that show white at the base.	<b>Best clue: Dark patagium.</b> Found only in the Red-tailed (all plumages). Wings are broad and bulge at secondaries. <b>Immature:</b> Distinctive pale base of primary creates a translucent squarish panel. Pale coverts.	Brown to gray-brown.  <b>Wing (cont)</b> Slight dihedral. Underwing “comma” at the wrist. Soars with tip flexed forward.	Very white below. A variably dark belly band is present on most birds.	May hover-hunt and is capable of kiting.	The red-tailed hawk will be the reference for identifying other buteos. This bird is the large hawk of the highway roadside.
Red-shouldered hawk	In flight it appears slimmer and sleeker than the Red-tailed. <b>Adult:</b> Body chestnut. <b>Immature:</b> Belly streaked.	Boldly striped with black and white broad bands. Tail sub-terminal band isn’t noticeably different from the other bands. Long in <b>immatures</b> , shorter in <b>adults</b> .	Relatively long, narrow and clean edged; lacks the bulging of the Red-tailed. Leading edge is straight; trailing edge curves gently ( <b>adults</b> ) or not at all ( <b>immatures</b> ). Crescent-shaped “stained glass window” is located at the base of primaries.	Nothing special to note.	<b>Adult:</b> Chestnut <b>Immature:</b> Cream-colored below with heavy streaking on the chest.	In full soar, <b>entire wing projects forward</b> , as though it were stretching forward with open arms. Beat is quicker than a Red-tailed but stiff, as though the bird was swatting the air with cupped wings.	“I thought it was an accipiter” General ‘jizz’ is that of a buteo trying to mimic an accipiter.
Broad-winged hawk	Small, chunky, stubby, and crow-sized. <b>Immature:</b> Brown above.	<b>Adult:</b> Broad black and white tail bands. May open very wide to appear short. When closed, it’s quite long and narrow; not buteo-like. Sub-terminal band on the tail is darker and wider than the other bands on the tail.	Underwings of both <b>immatures</b> and (especially) <b>adults</b> are very clean and white. This is accented by the broad, dark outer border extending from the tip to base along the trailing edge. The look is a white picture and black frame.	Nothing special to note.	<b>Adult:</b> Barring on chest. <b>Immature:</b> Creamy below with heavy streaking on the face, throat, sides, and belly (suggesting a band).	<b>Soar:</b> wings are short and broad and are held flat. <b>Glide:</b> Wing leading edge is curved and trailing edge is straight like that of a paring knife.	Depend more on thermals than most hawks. Travels in large groups (kettles).
Rough-legged hawk	Large, lanky, slender, buteo. Boldly patterned, setting the bird apart from most buteos. Several different plumages occur, relating to age and size, but these are conspicuous. Light-phased and dark-phased birds occur.	<b>Light phase:</b> Upper surface is white except for a broad, dark band at the tip. <b>Dark phase:</b> Show almost no white on the tail, and some have none. Some show an obvious broad, dark subterminal band.	Jut up sharply from the body forming pronounced dihedral that flattens at the wrist. Hunched-shoulder posture is only seen in the Rough-legged. <b>Light-phase:</b> Light with some streaking. <b>Dark-phase:</b> Black underwing linings.	<b>Light-phase:</b> Creamy or tawny crown and nape (usually streaked with brown). <b>Dark phase:</b> Black.	<b>Light-phase:</b> <b>Adult:</b> Heavily streaked on the chest, making the belly band less obvious. <b>Immature:</b> Largely unstreaked and very pale below. Note the carpal patch, dark belly, and dark tail band. <b>Dark Phase:</b> Silvery flight feathers and undertail contrasts with dark body and underwing coverts.	Wing beat is steady, unhurried, methodical, and deeply arched. Flapping doesn’t frequently happen in a series, as with other buteos, but if the bird does fly in a series of pumps and glides, there are more pumps to the glide.	Readily use their own power for flight. They are the least hesitant of the buteos in crossing open water. Flight seems effortless; done with a sense of purpose and grace.



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**February-May: Hamburg Hawkwatch.** Join the hawkwatchers at Lakeside Memorial Park in Hamburg, NY. Observers will be present from early morning to late afternoon, weather permitting.

**March 23: Lake Ontario Plains Field Trip.** Meet at 8:00 AM at the Tops Market parking lot in Wrights Corners (on Route 78 near Route 104). Leader: Willie D'Anna

**March 27: BOS Meeting.** Committee meetings and a business agenda. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**April 7: Iroquois NWR Field Trip. DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS.** Meet at 8:00 AM at Cayuga Pool parking lot which is on Route 77 in Iroquois NWR. Leader: Gail W. Seamans

**April 10: BOS Meeting.** 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**April 14: April Count.** Coordinator: Mike Hamilton 881-6709

**April 24: William C. Vaughan Lecture.** Dr. Sarah R. Morris (Canisius College Professor and BOS member) will present the lecture, *Gull Appreciation No. 101; an introduction to the fascinating biology of gulls* at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**April 28: Braddock Bay.** Sunday. This annual trip to the Hawk Watch will be co-led by Mike Zebehazy (BOS) and Bob Spahn (GOS). Meet at the Tanning Bed at Main and Transit at 7:00 AM. The group will proceed to the parking lot at Braddock Bay (Monroe County) for a 9 AM rendezvous with the GOS.

**May 5: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach for warblers.** Leader: Edward F. Ratajczak. Meet at 7:00 AM at the Tifft N. P. parking lot. This is a half day trip.

**May 19: May Count.** Coordinator: Robert Deleon 626-0325



# The PROTHONOTARY

Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 68, No. 3 March, 2002

### THE MONTH: February

by Bruce Chilton

On the whole, February was mild, continuing a pattern that began in November. The monthly average temperature was more than five degrees [F] warmer than normal; the daily temperatures averaged above normal on twenty of the twenty-eight days. On only three days did more than an inch of snow fall. However, the last of these days, the 27th, produced a heavy lake-effect snow, rare at this time of year because Lake Erie, normally frozen over by mid-January, had been allowed to remain ice-free by the mild weather. Snow depth was less than an inch on all but three days. The maximum depth was seven inches on the last day of the month.

The weather event of the month was, of course, the storm of Jan. 31- Feb.1, which produced what the National Weather Service referred to, with elegant alliteration, as a "potpourri of precipitation". (Shades of Spiro Agnew's magnificent "nattering nabobs of negativism".) The southern part of the region escaped with rain and wind, but the northern part, a few degrees colder, was hit by a damaging ice storm. The trouble

was compounded by strong winds on Feb. 1, with a peak gust at Buffalo Airport of 51 miles an hour, a record for the month. Over half of the homes over north suburban Buffalo lost power, some for as long as three days.

Enough about the weather; let's turn to the birds. The month was notable for two extreme rarities. The first, a Townsend's

Solitaire, was first seen in December. It obligingly remained at Bond Lake County Park in the town of Lewiston through the entire month of February, apparently kept happy by a good supply of berries. It could be hard to locate at times, though. The second rarity was a Smith's Longspur. It's unfortunate that this bird chose to remain in Hagersville, Ontario, tantalizingly close to BOS territory, but not countable. It was observed several times during the month.

February 24 brought a sighting of a Greater White-fronted Goose at Cayuga Pool, Iroquois NWR, accompanying about five hundred Canada Geese. It was apparently of the Greenland race, distinguished by the orange tint of the bill.

Another interesting discovery concerned four Trumpeter Swans off Buckhorn Island State Park on the 15th. There are always a few days in late winter when a large number of Tundra Swans appear there; this time, they were accompanied by the Trumpeters. These birds, all with readable collar bands and one with a transmitter, were identified as having come from the Oak Orchard release program.

Two species which can now perhaps be thought of as "our usual winter rarities" included: (1) the SUNY at Buffalo Merlins, back for another stay at the south campus of the university (five of them this time!) and (2) the California Gull, putting in a few appearances at the Adam Beck power plant for another year. In addition, a Dark-eyed Junco of the Oregon subspecies was reported from a feeder in Eden. It remained throughout the month.

The Navy Island Bald Eagles showed up again, with a maximum of six on the 23rd. A few Common Ravens were spotted in the Southern Tier. There were some

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Pine Grosbeaks at Bond Lake on the 8th and the 23rd, in the general area where the Solitaire was seen.

## LAKE ONTARIO PLAIN

MARCH 24, 2002

by Willie D'Anna

The B.O.S. field trip to eastern Niagara and western Orleans County was attended by 18 birders on a lovely cool day with lots of sunshine. Considering the weather conditions preceding this day, which were not conducive to migration, it was perhaps not too surprising that the numbers of some species were down. Still, we worked hard and turned up most of the expected birds. At Barker Bicentennial Park on Lake Ontario

the many species of waterfowl included one Red-throated and one breeding-plumaged Common Loon, several Horned Grebes including some in alternate plumage, and Tundra Swans. The lighting on the waterfowl was excellent, though of course we wished they were closer!

Our walk at Golden Hill State Park produced very little in the way of songbirds but a Belted Kingfisher and a Red-bellied Woodpecker were added as were the first migrating vultures and hawks of the day - Turkey Vulture, Red-shouldered, Red-tailed, Cooper's, and Sharp-shinned Hawks. Off the cliffs in the park were two Hooded Mergansers and a distant female duck that was tentatively identified as either a female Red-head, Lesser Scaup or a Ring-necked Duck! Unfortunately, it never did give us conclusive views.

Continuing east, after a rest stop at the Country Store, we stopped along Route 18 to look over a large

group of geese and to scan for hawks. New species included several Rough-Legged Hawks, an American Kestrel, and an immature Bald Eagle. On Marshall Road we stopped to study a flock of blackbirds, grackles, and cowbirds and found one Rusty Blackbird in the group. A nearby Red-bellied Woodpecker gave us good views. We made a few stops on Marshall Road to look over the geese and to watch migrating raptors, including several more Rough-Legged Hawks. Two Wild Turkeys at the north end of Marshall were fairly close - they hurriedly moved toward the hedgerow.

At Shadigee we had two more Red-Throated Loons, including one that was close enough and cooperative enough for everyone to well observe. Starting the drive back to Wright's Corners we added five more Rough-Legged Hawks along Lakeshore Road, giving us about 15 for the day. We stopped at a few spots to look over the geese on our way back but could not turn up a single Snow Goose for the day! In fact I have only seen one on the Lake Plain this year. A hundred miles or so further east, they are seeing thousands. That's a pretty tight flyway!

On Townline Road near Johnson Creek Road, we looked over the large pond in the field on the southwest quadrant and saw our first Northern Pintails (over 40), a species that had been fairly numerous and widespread on the Lake Plain two weeks earlier. When a large flock of Canada Geese came in, we picked out a smaller paler goose that may well have been a Richardson's Canada Goose but it landed in a distant depression (causing the same for us). While here, a Greater Yellowlegs dropped into the pond - a fine addition and our last new species of the day. We looked over some more flocks of Canada Geese and called it a day. Our total was 55 species.





## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Pied-billed Grebe	10	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Horned Grebe	17	2	Olcott	Klick et al
"	24	73	Yates	Klick, Harris
D.-crested Cormorant	8	1	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
"	17	1	Wilson	Klick et al
Great Blue Heron	8,15	33,51	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
Turkey Vulture	22F	1	Niagara Falls	S&T O'Donnell
"	24	2	Yates	Klick
"	24	4	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew
"	25	4	Lewiston	Horne
* <u>Gr. White-fr. Goose</u>	24	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris, Klick
Snow Goose	3	2	Fort Erie, Ont.	Harris
"	17	50 white	Pomfret	Moshers
"	25	60 white	South Wales	Ferraro
Mute Swan	18	3 ad	Grand Island	Rew, Horbett
<u>Trumpeter Swan</u>	15	4	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Skalicky
Tundra Swan	8,18	49,51	Grand Island	Burch
"	15;18	125;148	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Skalicky; Rew, Horbett
"	16	5	Golden Hill S.P.	D'Anna
"	24	20	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
Wood Duck	7	1	Silver Creek	Harris
American Wigeon	24F	11	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
Northern Pintail	24F	31	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
Canvasback	12	650	Buffalo	Galas, Watson
Redhead	15	141	Buffalo Harbor	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	14	40	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Andrles
"	15	1	Grand Island	Hess
"	24F	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
King Eider	3	2	Jordan Harbour	Bellerby
Common Merganser	24	7	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
Bald Eagle	3	2	Allegheny Reservoir	LeBlanc
"	8,23	5,6	Navy Island	Burch
"	11	1	Grand Island	Galas et al
"	11	1 imm.	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Galas et al
"	12	2	Strawberry Island	Galas et al
"	24	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
Northern Harrier	23	8	Porter	S&T O'Donnell
Rough-legged Hawk	3,10	3,2	Randolph	LeBlanc
"	3	1	Yates	S&T O'Donnell
"	7	1	Pomfret	Harris
"	10	1	Rainham, Ont.	Klick, Harris

<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	13	1	Stockton	Mosher
Merlin	<u>1-28</u>	5	Buffalo (UB)	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	<u>19</u>	2	Buffalo	Burch
Killdeer	9F	1	Eden	Harris
"	25	1	Salamanca	LeBlanc
Little Gull	5	4	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	7	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Harris
"	11	2	Porter	Galas et al
"	17	3	Lewiston	Klick et al
Bonaparte's Gull	5,14	3830,2950	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
<u>California Gull</u>	2,18	1	Adam Beck Hydro,Ont.	D'Anna
Glaucous Gull	12	1	Buffalo	Galas, Watson
"	16	1	Wilson	D'Anna
Snowy Owl	2	1	Niag. Falls Airport	S&T O'Donnell
Long-eared Owl	17	4	Golden Hill S.P.	S&T O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl	2,23	4,5	Porter	S&T O'Donnell
Red-headed Wdpkr.	2	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	S&T O'Donnell
"	11	2	Porter	Galas et al
Northern Shrike	3	1	Somerset	Yoerg, Henderson
"	15;24	1;1	Oakfield	Kehlenbeck; S&T O'Donnell
"	24	1	Lakeside Beach S.P.	Klick, Harris
Common Raven	10	2	Boyce Hill S.F.	DeSha
"	16	2	<u>Wethersfield</u>	Fox
"	24	1	Allegany S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
Carolina Wren	3,10	1	Salamanca	LeBlanc
"	9	1	Beaver Is. S.P.	Hess
"	17	2	Lancaster	Morgante
"	21	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrles
"	24	1	Allegany S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
Eastern Bluebird	3	3	Salamanca	LeBlanc
"	7	3	Dunkirk Airport	Rew
"	24	2	Wales	Bee
<u>Townsend's Solitaire</u>	2,12,23	1	Bond Lake Park	D'Anna et al
Swamp Sparrow	17	1	Randolph	LeBlanc
Dark-eyed Junco				
<u>J. h. oreganus</u>	1-28	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
Snow Bunting	13	1	Allegheny Reservoir	LeBlanc
"	15	500	Alabama	Kehlenbeck
"	17	12	Iroquois N.W.R.	Galas, Rising
Red-w. Blackbird	14F	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	15	5	Tifft N.P.	Watson
"	15	1	Tonawanda	Watson
"	17	32	Randolph	LeBlanc
Rusty Blackbird	1	2	Grand Island (f)	Burch
Common Grackle	1	3	Buffalo	Galas et al
"	22F	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	25	5	Tonawanda	Hess
Brown-headed Cowbird	2	39	Tonawanda	Galas et al
"	12-13	2	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
Pine Grosbeak	8;23	15;16	Bond Lake Park	Rew; D'Anna
Common Redpoll	10	1	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	15	27	Pomfret	Mosher
"	17	90	Newfane	Klick et al
Pine Siskin	14-28	2	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
"	17	1	Beaver Meadow N.C.	Yoerg, Henderson
Evening Grosbeak	1;24	10;23	Allegany S.P.	Harris; Yoerg
"	1	7	Franklinville(f)	DeSha

Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:	130
Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:	1
Total for the year 2002:	<u>131</u>

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Mike Morgante, 16 Lakeside Crescent, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086 (email:

## Federation Waterfowl Count: January 12-20, 2002

by Bill Burch

*Introduction.* This report gives the results for Region 1 of the Annual Waterfowl Count of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. Census results will be used by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to monitor long-term population trends. Statewide results will be published in the Federation Journal, The Kingbird, at a later date. Region 1 consists of the BOS study area, minus the land on the Canadian side of the Niagara River.

*Results.* This 2002 count was the third highest in number of individuals, but still 46% below last year's record total. Most species numbers were close to average, but record highs were reached in Double-crested Cormorant, Tundra Swan, Black Scoter, Harlequin Duck, Bufflehead and Hooded Merganser (see data below).

*Discussion.* The weather was generally favorable for the January 12-20 count period. It was mainly overcast and there was no snow for most participants. Daily highs were 30-34 degrees [F] and the lows were 20-24 [F]. The wind varied from 10-35 m.p.h., giving a moderate effect inland, but severe at times for those on the lake front.

Buffalo's record five-day snowfall, starting December 24, 2001, dropped 82 inches of it on the Buffalo Airport. However, by the time of the count, two weeks later, the effect was mostly a snow cover of 2-5 inches with 18 inches in spots. Roads were open and dry.

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Red-throated Loon	1	unusual (B)
Common Loon	1	(D)
Horned Grebe	2	low (F, I)
Pied-billed Grebe	15	high (most I)
Red-necked Grebe	1	unusual (D)
Double-cr. Cormorant	107	record high (most I)
Tundra Swan	258	record high (most F)
Canada Goose	2939	high
Wood Duck	7	average (F,I)
Mallard	5267	average
Am. Black Duck	79	low
Gadwall	62	average
Green-winged Teal	2	high (F)
American Wigeon	17	variable (D)
Canvasback	6863	average (most G)
Redhead	312	average (most F)
Ring-necked Duck	47	high (most F)
Greater Scaup	13,444	high (most H)
Lesser Scaup	23	low (E,F)
Black Scoter	5	record high (D)
White-winged Scoter	106	variable (B,D)
Harlequin Duck	2	record high (E)
Long-tailed Duck	2195	average (most B)
Common Goldeneye	1551	low
Bufflehead	3347	record high (most F)
Common Merganser	2758	average
Red-br. Merganser	159	average
Hooded Merganser	65	record high (E,F,I)
Ruddy Duck	6	high
American Coot	223	high (most I,J)
unidentified	1372	
<u>Total Species</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>average</u>
<u>Total Individuals</u>	<u>41,236</u>	<u>high</u>



Both lake Erie and Lake Ontario were open and remained open throughout the winter. In the southern tier the Allegheny River was open; the Allegheny Reservoir was frozen. Chautauqua Lake was frozen, but the outlet at the SE end was open; most of the waterfowl were found there.

The mild winter may have delayed arrival of waterfowl. Hunters on Grand Island thought the ducks were late in coming, and scarce even as the duck hunting season ended January 6. In addition, the count was influenced by the open water of Lake Erie which attracted large flocks, which otherwise could have gathered below the ice boom and been countable.

The record number of Bufflehead, 3347, illustrates how chance (and the open lake) plays a part in the record: Party F (Galas and Rising) arrived at the upper Niagara River near the Lake Erie ice boom, at 9:00 a.m. on January 13. They immediately began counting a large flock of about 3000 Buffleheads. Hardly had they finished when the flock took off and disappeared westward over Lake Erie. Had there been a delay of 30 minutes, the Region 1 count would have been only 361 Buffleheads.

As an astonishing afternote, the same team returned to the same spot a week later, at 9:00 a.m., again counted approximately 3000 Buffleheads, and watched them once again fly off over Lake Erie.

Canvasback ducks were still arriving at the start of the count period. The early counts of these in the pertinent sections (F and G) seemed low, so the counts were repeated on January 20. This doubled the Canvasback count to 6847; this is in line with numbers from 1996-2000. We probably came close to counting them at their maximum number.

The Tundra Swan count of 258 continues the high swan counts of the past three years, easily passing the record of 144 of 2001. All but five of this flock were in the west branch of the upper Niagara River, gathered in the quiet water in the lee of the Canadian shore. That stretch, west of Beaver Island State Park, attracted 191 and 228 swans on other days of the count. Beaver Island, usually a favored swan spot, attracted a few on count week because of rough water from high, unfavorable, winds.

The pair of Harlequin Ducks (1m and 1f) were seen on the Buffalo waterfront during count week by several BOS members. Single Harlequin Ducks have been seen on nine occasions during the 48 years of this count, but this is the first time that two were present.

Eleven Bald Eagles were seen and reported as part of the DEC midwinter Bald Eagle survey: Of the six wintering on Navy Island, three immatures were seen; one harassing Canvasbacks on Grand Island. Five adults

were seen on the Allegheny River near Salamanca,, Area K. Two adults were seen at Iroquois NWR, at the nest behind the headquarters building.

### Territories and Party Leaders

A - Lake Ontario, Point Breeze to Olcott	J. Farrell
B - Lake Ontario, Olcott to Ft. Niagara	P. Yoerg
C - Ft. Niagara to base of Falls, U.S. side	M. Davis
D - NOTL to base of Falls, Can. side	M. Zebehazy
E - Buffalo harbor to Goat Is., NY side	J. Thill
F - Lake Erie to Horseshoe Falls, Can-side	D. Roberson
G - Grand Island, NY, (in Niagara River)	D. Brasure
H - Lake Erie; Bflo s. harbor to Silver Crk	D. Suggs
I - Lake Erie; Silver Crk to PA state line	F. Rew
J - Jamestown and Chautauqua Lake	R. Sundell
K - Olean and Salamanca	T. Baird
L - Allegany County	D. Burton
M - Batavia	not covered
N - Oak Orchard and Tonawanda W.M.A.	E. Ratajczak
O - Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge	E. Ratajczak
P - Amherst, Clarence, Cheektowaga	W. Burch
Q - Delaware Park, Forest Lawn Cm.	B. Klick
R - So.Park, Caz. Park & Crk.,W. Seneca	J. Landau
abbreviation: Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL)	

**Participants.** The compiler extends his thanks to the BOS members and friends who took part in this annual count: Bob Andrlle, Tim Baird, Stan Bajurny, Don Brasure, Bill Broderick, Bill Burch, Olive Burch, Doris Burton, David Cooper, Willie D’Anna, Mike Davis, Mike DaSha, Jerry Farrell, Mike Galas, Doug Happ, Barbara Henderson, Audrey Horbett, Brendan Klick, Jim Landau, Karen Landau, Tom LeBlanc, Bob Lipp, Norm Murr, Ed Ratajczak, Frances Rew, Gerry Rising, Don Roberson, Vicki Rothman, Carmen Scutella, Dave Suggs, Debbie Suggs, Bob Sundell, Joe Thill, Kirk Vanstrom, Larry Wilson, Peter Yoerg, and Mike Zebehazy.





# Brown-headed Cowbird Parasitism

by William Watson

The Brown-headed Cowbird is North America's most well-known brood parasite. Instead of building their own nests, incubating their own eggs and raising their own nestlings, Brown-headed Cowbirds have a different breeding strategy. Cowbird females use other bird species as hosts, laying their eggs in the nests of other bird species and relying on those hosts to incubate and raise their chicks. While a considerable amount of information is already known about Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism, the ongoing New York State Breeding Bird Atlas Project may provide revealing information specific to the BOS region of New York State.

The Buffalo Ornithological Society Research Committee is requesting members to participate in a study pertaining to Brown-headed Cowbird brood parasitism. Field workers for the 1980-1985 and 2000-2004 New York State Breeding Bird Atlas have accumulated a wealth of information, however much of this is not stored in an information database, *e.g.*, generally only the highest breeding code for a species is reported at the conclusion of each season. This project is aimed to archive observations of Brown-headed Cowbird brood parasitism in the BOS study area and to provide answers for the questions below. During the 2002-2004 seasons atlas workers (and other bird-watchers) are asked to document observation of Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism using the short survey form shown at the right.

The motivation for this study is to determine the Brown-headed Cowbird breeding season length and to identify their host species. We will also determine the relative percentages of different host species that are utilized by the Brown-headed Cowbird, thus, it is imperative that **all** observations be reported to achieve a uniform sampling.

We would also like past atlas data (2000-1), especially if the journal method of atlasing was implemented and observations of breeding bird behavior have been documented. If you recorded atlas data on a field card, we are still interested in your observations (refer to question 6 on the Brown-headed Cowbird Survey Form).

All reports and inquiries about Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism should be directed to:

Bill Watson 771 Fletcher Street  
Tonawanda, New York 14150  
(telephone) 695-2820  
(E-mail) WWWWatsonSr@cs.com

## Brown-head Cowbird Survey Form (Use this form flexibly)

1. Host species: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Nature of parasitism: egg in nest, feeding of young cowbird by host species, etc.
3. Location: county, atlas block number, and exact place, if possible.
4. Date of observation: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Habitat description: If within wooded area, estimate distance to edge of woods.
6. Indicate method you used in recording this data:  
Check one.  
\_\_\_\_ I obtained this data by recording all Brown-headed Cowbird observations in a field journal.  
\_\_\_\_ I took this information from my Breeding Bird Atlas Field Card that I carry when atlasing.  
\_\_\_\_ Not sure. The year I made this observation I used both methods of atlasing.  
please estimate:  
\_\_\_\_ % time using journal  
\_\_\_\_ % time using card
7. Name, address, and telephone number of observer:
8. Remarks:



# **Establishment of the Black-crowned Night-Heron Colony on Motor Island**

*by William Watson*

Motor Island (also called Pirate's Island) is a small teardrop shaped island in the east branch of the Niagara River, due east of Beaver Island State Park. It has successfully served as an avian breeding site and nursery for Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Black-crown Night-Herons, Double-crested Cormorants (1997), Ring-billed Gulls, Canada Geese, and ducks.

The heron colony was established on March 24, 1990, when Great Blue Herons were observed nest building. Seven Great Blue Heron nests were studied that year at the south end of the island. In 1994, the author, made an on site investigation and counted eight Great Blue Heron nests and twelve Black-crowned Night-Heron nests. On May 13, 1995, Great Egrets were observed nest building and eventually constructed two nests that year. By 2001 the colony had expanded to cover all of Motor Island and boasted 108 Great Blue Heron, 102 Black-crown Night-Heron, and 8 Great Egret nests.

Disturbance to the nesting birds was minimized by observing the colony from the Sheridan Drive boat launch at a distance of about 2,000 feet, and less often from Beaver Island State Park at a distance of about 1,500 feet. Observations were made with a 60 mm Bushnell Space Master Telescope (15X-45X) and a 2000 mm Celestron Telescope (50X and 167X).

Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets are more easily observed building nests and feeding young while Black-crown Night-Herons are more difficult to observe. Several factors contribute:

Firstly, Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets build there nests at the edges and tops of tree and bushes where they are clearly visible. (This is more true for Great Blue Heron than Great Egret.) This is not the case for Black-crowned Night-Herons which build there nests deep within small trees and bushes. Black-crown Night-Heron nests are usually blocked from view by foliage making their observation difficult.

Secondly, Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets construct there nests of less abundant, larger diameter sticks that have fallen from trees. This nesting material is carried, sometimes for large distances, to the nest site. Subsequently, these birds are often seen circling and flying across Motor Island carrying the nest material. In contrast, Black-crown Night-Herons build their nests out of more abundant thinner sticks which can be collected in the concealment of the same bushes in which their nests are being built. Black-crowned

Night-Herons have not been observed carrying nesting material during the twelve years of this study.

Thirdly, Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets frequently stand as protective sentinels at conspicuous locations near their nests. This is especially true when the nests have eggs or hatchlings. In contrast, Black-crown Night-Herons do not stand at conspicuous locations in the colony, instead they may rely on the Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets to protect the colony.

Due to the above reasons, it was relatively easy to date the establishment of the Motor Island Great Blue Heron and Great Egret colonies, but more difficult to determine the same for the Black-crowned Night-Heron colony. There was no evidence of Black-crowned Night-Herons during the 1990 breeding season. That year was the first that Great Blue Herons colonized Motor Island and their breeding activity was well documented with regular observations of the colony and it is unlikely that nesting Black-crowned Night Herons were overlooked.

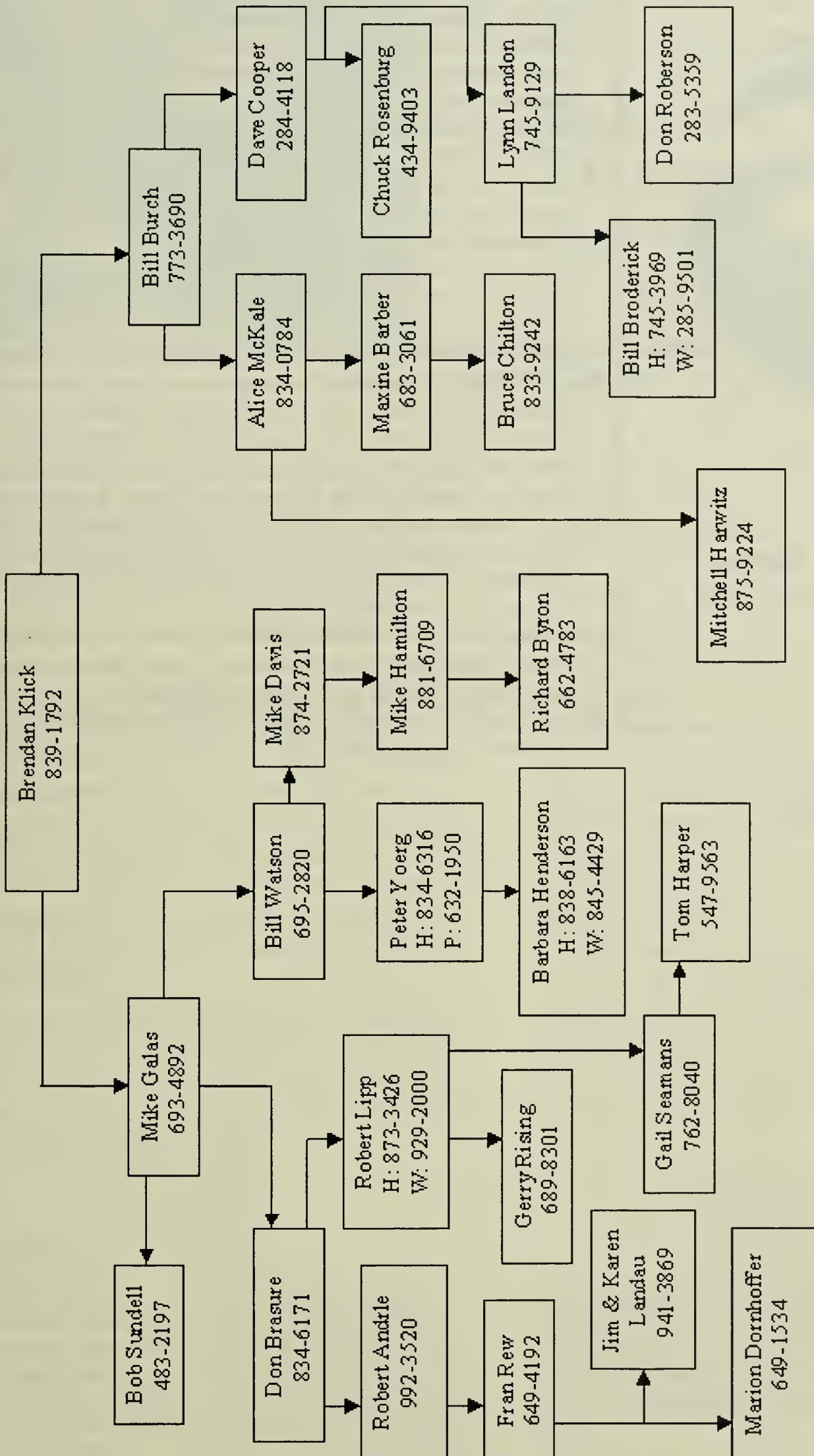
Black-crowned Night Heron breeding records for 1991: This season was the most poorly documented between the years 1990 and 2001. Nevertheless, on July 10, 1991 during the time interval of 7:26 - 7:38 AM two juvenile Black-crowned Night-Herons were observed in the Great Blue Heron colony. Presumably these juvenile Black-crowned Night-Herons fledged from nests on the island that were proximal to or within the Great Blue Heron colony.

Black-crowned Night Heron breeding records for 1992: On April 24, 1992 at 7:02 AM nine Black-crowned Night-Herons were counted at the Motor Island colony. On June 18, 1992 between 10:14 and 10:46 AM three Black-crowned Night-Heron nests were studied, each contained three nestlings. On June 29, 1992, between 8:06 and 8:35 AM, two adult and fifteen immature Black-crowned Night-Herons were observed. Seven of the immature Black-crowned Night-Herons were at the shore and eight were in the small trees and bushes of the Motor Island colony. At 8:35 AM four Black-crowned Night-Heron nestlings were observed being fed by an adult.

An interesting note: After fledging, herons and egrets will often stand along the south shore of Motor Island where they may be learning hunting skills prior to leaving the colony. In recent years, it was not unusual to see fifty or more Black-crown Night-Herons along the shore line displaying this behavior.

In conclusion, although immature Black-crowned Night-Herons were observed at the Motor Island colony during the 1991 breeding season and probably bred there, the first certain documentation was recorded in 1992.





1) If you see a rare bird please call Brendan Klick @ 839-1792 or Bill Burch @ 773-3690 or Mike Galas @ 693-4892 as soon as possible.

2) Call your listed contacts

3) If no contact is made, leave a message on the answering machine

4) Call the contacts of the party you were unable to reach even if you left a message on their machine.

5) Please notify Dial-a-Bird 896-1271 or David Suggs 836-2868 and leave a message.

6) Any questions, doubts or for removal from the list please call Brendan Klick 839-1792 or e-mail > [Klicka03@mail.buffalostate](mailto:Klicka03@mail.buffalostate)

April 02 mfg



**Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## April-May-June Calendar

**February-May: Hamburg Hawkwatch.** Join the hawkwatchers at Lakeside Memorial Park in Hamburg, NY. Observers will be present from early morning to late afternoon, weather permitting.

**April 14: April Count.** Coordinator: Mike Hamilton 881-6709

**April 24: William C. Vaughan Lecture.** Dr. Sarah R. Morris (Canisius College Professor and BOS member) will present the lecture, **Gull Appreciation 101: An introduction to the fascinating biology of gulls** at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**April 28: Braddock Bay.** Sunday. This annual trip to the Hawk Watch will be co-led by Mike Zebchazy (BOS) and Bob Spahn (GOS). Meet at the Tanning Bed at Main and Transit at 7:00 AM. The group will proceed to the parking lot at Braddock Bay (Monroe County) for a 9 AM rendezvous with the GOS.

**May 5: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach for warblers.** Leader: Edward F. Ratajczak. Meet at 7:00 AM at the Tifft N. P. parking lot. This is a half day trip.

**May 19: May Count.** Coordinator: Robert DeLeon 626-0325

**June 7: Friday. Canadian Whip-poor-will and Chinese Dinner.** Leader: Bill Burch 773-3690. Meet at Vermont and Busti at 6 p.m. We will eat in the Lotus Garden Restaurant in Port Colborne, Ontario. This is at 182 West Street, on the west bank of the Welland Canal. Then we go to Wilson Road, which is four miles west of town. Reservations appreciated.

**June 9: Southern Tier Field Trip to New Hudson and Rushford Townships in Allegany County for Clay-colored Sparrow and Prairie Warbler.** Co-leaders: Brendan Klick and/or Don Harris. Meet at the Burger King in Springville on Route 219 at 7:30 AM.

**June and July. NYS Breeding Bird Atlas.** To sign up for a Breeding Bird Atlas Block Email Dick Rosche at [drosche@juno.com](mailto:drosche@juno.com) or if you do not have internet access call him at 652-8409.

**Note:** Unless noted, field trips are full day in length. Prepare accordingly.

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# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: March

*by Robert Wagner*

The most memorable event in March may have been the winds that gusted up to 70 miles per hour on the evening of the 9th, uprooting trees, causing widespread power outages and destroying two Bald Eagle nests in the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge.

Incubation had been under way for 13 days at the Mohawk Pool nest and an egg was lost, along with the nest. The pair built another nest, farther out in the marsh, but as of this writing have not re-produced. The new site is not visible from the refuge headquarters building, where visitors had been able to observe the earlier nesting from a telescope and a video camera. Twenty-four eaglets have been generated from the Mohawk Pool site since the nesting territory was established there in 1986 (following a successful government "hacking" program to re-establish a species decimated by DDT).

The second pair of Bald Eagles at the Cayuga Overlook had not begun incubation when their nest was destroyed. The pair built a new one in the same tree but they have not produced an egg, either, according to Paul Hess, refuge biologist. This nesting site was first activated last year, when a single eaglet was fledged.

Fortunately, a third nest, at a new site in Windmill Marsh in the state's Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area survived the storm and at last report had produced at least one eaglet. This pair can be observed from the edge of a grass field about 200 feet south

of an observation tower on Albion Road. Also, a pair of Osprey has taken up residence in the Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area off Route 77, according to Dan Carroll, a state biologist.

Bald Eagles were also observed until late in the month by William Burch and William Watson in the vicinity of Navy Island, where the species had nested in days gone by.

Peter Yoerg had up to five Merlin, often roosting each evening in groves of Austrian pine, on the University at Buffalo's South Campus off Main Street. This is the fourth successive year that Yoerg has had wintering Merlin at the UB site. The number has increased, starting with one bird the first year, and all have been either female or immature. "I've never had an adult male," Yoerg noted.

And a pair of Peregrine Falcons returned to a nesting site installed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on the 17th floor of the Statler Towers in downtown Buffalo. They have nested in Buffalo, either at the Statler or at City Hall, since 1996.

The Buffalo Ornithological Society has joined with DEC, the Audubon Society and Northstar Development to sponsor a live video monitoring of the nesting that can be viewed from the lobby of the Statler in a former travel agency office or on the Internet at [www.birdlink.info/birdcam](http://www.birdlink.info/birdcam).

Burch reported that a pair of Peregrine Falcons has also resumed nesting in the Niagara Gorge at Goat Island.

Other notable records included an Eared Grebe on the 16th in Windmill Marsh, Sandhill Crane on the 24th at the Hamburg Hawkwatch, Pomarine Jaeger on

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the 30th off Fort Niagara.

Mike Morgante was able to find eight of the Richardson's subspecies among an estimated 10,000 Canada Geese at the Cayuga Overlook on the 9th. "They looked like miniature versions of the abundant eastern forms of Canada Geese," Morgante wrote. "The geese were considerably smaller in size and paler brown and had stubbier bills than the 'typical' Canada Geese" and tended to remain together in small groups.

The weather may have had the effect of keep birders and birds under cover. The 15.9 inches of snow during the month was 5.6 inches above normal, because the mild temperatures of the winter had left Lake Erie largely unfrozen, which set the stage

for Lake effect snow, especially "in the ski country and the Southern Tier."

The March average temperature of 34.2 degrees was 0.1 degree below the norm. But the month was characterized by "some wide swings in day to day temperatures." For example, "a high temperature of 69 degrees [F] on March 9th was followed by a maximum reading of 30 degrees on the 10th," which contributed to windy conditions.



## A New Late Nesting Record for Tufted Titmouse in New York State

by William Watson

Similar to species such as the Northern Cardinal, Northern Mockingbird, Carolina Wren, and Great Egret, the Tufted Titmouse was formerly an exclusive southern species that has gradually expanded its range northward. There are several possible explanations for its range expansion: First, the increase in number of winter feeding stations during the last fifty years has provided a supplemental, high energy food supply that may contribute to their survival during our cold winter nights. Second, and still controversial, global warming and an increase in green house gases may be contributing to warmer winters, resulting in increased winter survival rates. Third, as more and more abandoned farm land undergoes succession to secondary and then mature forest, the breeding habitat for this cavity nesting species has, and continues to, increase in Western New York. Lastly, industrialization and a population increase in the U.S. sun belt has caused a loss of habitat, and may have contributed to the displacement of this southern species northward.

The status of Tufted Titmouse in New York State during the nineteenth century is uncertain. During this time there were no New York State breeding records of Tufted Titmouse, and this species is either absent or reported as rare in the New York State records. Although the Tufted Titmouse has been assigned the status of a "permanent resident" throughout its breeding range, it commonly engages in post breeding dispersal and nomadic fall and winter wanderings. This inquisitive and energetic little bird often appears in the colder months, busily foraging with other birds from tree to tree through our forests and woodlots. It will wander in small groups with other Tufted Titmice or with other species like its cousins the chickadees, or sparrows and other small to medium size passerines. It is during these fall and winter wanderings that these little vagrants are often found far north of their established breeding range. They do not always wander north. For example, a Tufted Titmouse that was banded in Springfield, Massachusetts (where it was then very rare) on July 23, 1963, was recovered about six months later more than 130 miles to the southwest at Port Jervis, New York (in Orange County) on February 1, 1964 (Bull 1974). As this example and many others show, the vagrant tendency of this species suggests rare records of Tufted Titmice would have been expected in New York State throughout the nineteenth century. (continued on page 43)



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	15F	1	Golden Hill S.P.	D'Anna
"	24	1	Somerset	D'Anna(BOS)
"	24	2	Shadigee	D'Anna(BOS)
"	29	2	Four Mile Creek S.P.	D'Anna(BOS)
Common Loon	25F	1	Quaker Lake	LeBlanc
Horned Grebe	16F	1	Buffalo Harbor	Andrle
"	16	5	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Klick
"	24	11	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	25	28	Quaker Lake	LeBlanc
* <u>Eared Grebe</u>	16	1	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Klick, Sowinski
D.-crested Cormorant	29	1	Wilson	D'Anna
Great Blue Heron	22	56	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
Black-cr. Night-Heron	22;31	1;10	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson; S&T O'Donnell
Snow Goose	1	71	Kuckville	Ewald
"	2	1 blue phase	Somerset	D'Anna
"	2	9	Iroquois N.W.R.	Fox
"	3	3	Royalton	Galas et al
"	9	14	Yates	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16	1	Lockport	Klick, Sowinski
"	24	1 blue phase	Oakfield	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	2	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	3	Newstead	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	1	Machias	LeBlanc
*Canada Goose				
<u>B. c. hutchinsii</u>	9	8	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
Tundra Swan	3,5,11	301,312,326	Iroquois N.W.R.	Galas et al
"	5,11	300,276	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Galas, Rising
"	9	105	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
"	9	26	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	9	80	Somerset	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	145	Farmersville	DeSha
"	31	37	Hamburg	Klick, Russel
Wood Duck	1	2	Hamburg	Andrle
Gadwall	15	2	Tonawanda W.M.A.	D'Anna, Potter
American Wigeon	1	3	Beaver Is. S.P.	Hess
"	2	300	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Fox
*Blue-winged Teal	28F	1	N. Collins	Klick, Harris
"	30	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	D'Anna
Northern Shoveler	9F	6	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Wojewodzki
"	16	6	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Sowinski
"	24	60	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson

<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Northern Pintail	2;16	1100;224	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Fox; Klick
Green-winged Teal	15	15	Tonawanda W.M.A.	D'Anna, Potter
Canvasback	24	1	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	1	N. Collins	Klick, Harris
Redhead	16	2	Oakfield	Klick, Sowinski
"	24	5	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	5	N. Collins	Klick, Harris
"	31	2	S. Dayton	LeBlanc
Ring-necked Duck	3	82	Iroquois N.W.R.	Galas et al
"	25,31	192,387	Quaker Lake	LeBlanc, DeSha
Lesser Scaup	3	20	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	15	82	Red House Lake	LeBlanc
"	25	32	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	29	46	Allegheny Reservoir	LeBlanc
Black Scoter	<u>11</u>	2	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Yoerg
Long-tailed Duck	23	5	S. Dayton	LeBlanc, DeSha
"	24	3	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	6	Bear Lake	Mosher
"	25	56	Quaker Lake	LeBlanc
"	25	19	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	29	7	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
Ruddy Duck	3F,24	16,75	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16	6	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Klick, Sowinski
"	28	5	Tifft N.P.	Watson
"	28	22	N. Collins	Klick, Harris
"	31	5	S. Dayton	LeBlanc
*Osprey	29F,31	3,5	Allegheny Reservoir	LeBlanc
"	31	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Klick et al
Bald Eagle	3;9	2;3	Iroquois N.W.R.	Galas; Morgante
"	8	1 imm.	Marilla	Holmes
"	9	5	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	10	2	Allegheny Reservoir	LeBlanc, Baird, Eaton
"	15	3	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Andrle
"	16	3	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Sowinski
"	16	1	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Klick, Sowinski
"	23	1 ad.	Bear Lake	Mosher
"	23,26;29	2,3;2	Navy Island	Burch; Watson
"	24	1 imm.	Somerset	D'Anna(BOS)
Red-shouldered Hawk	8	1	Cowlesville	Fox
"	9	5	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	9	5	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Klick et al
Rough-legged Hawk	3,5,31	2,5,1	Randolph	LeBlanc, DeSha
"	6	1	Stockton	Mosher
"	9,24	7,15	Yates	D'Anna et al
Merlin	<u>1-31</u>	5 max.	Buffalo (UB)	Yoerg
American Coot	15	29	Iroquois N.W.R.	D'Anna, Potter
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	24	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Andrle
*Greater Yellowlegs	22F	1	Somerset	Watson, D'Anna(BOS)
"	31	1	Yates	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	3	Conewango	LeBlanc
Common Snipe	15F	1	Grand Island	Burch
"	23,31	1,4	Randolph	LeBlanc, DeSha



<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
*American Woodcock	8F	2	Pomfret	Mosher
"	13	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
*Pomarine Jaeger	30	1	Fort Niagara S.P.	D'Anna
Little Gull	2	5	Lewiston	S&T O'Donnell
"	11	6	Squaw Island	Yoerg
"	16	2	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Bellerby
Bonaparte's Gull	5,27	2310,2440	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	10	1	Allegany S.P.	LeBlanc, Baird, Eaton
Iceland Gull	17	7	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	27	2	Woodlawn Beach S.P.	Turisk
Lesser Black-b. Gull	17	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
Glaucous Gull	8	1	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	11,16;17	2,2;1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Bellerby; D'Anna
Long-eared Owl	23,24	1,2	Golden Hill S.P.	S&T O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl	1	1	Barre	Fox
"	1,9,31	5,7,2	Porter	S&T O'Donnell; Yoerg
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	9;14,27	1;1,1	Wilson-Tusc. S.P.	Yoerg; S&T O'Donnell
"	15	1	Golden Hill S.P.	Potter, D'Anna
"	29	1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Potter
Red-headed Wdpkr.	2,30	1,1	Fort Niagara S.P.	D'Anna, Potter
"	11	1	Porter	Galas et al
*Yellow-b. Sapsucker	13	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
*Eastern Phoebe	28F	1	Hamburg	Klick
"	31	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	31	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	31	1	Allegany S.P.	LeBlanc
"	31	1	S. Dayton	LeBlanc
Northern Shrike	3	1	Allegany S.P.	LeBlanc, DeSha
"	15	1	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	17	1	Machias	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	29	1	Newfane	D'Anna
Common Raven	10	1	Allegany S.P.	LeBlanc, Baird, Eaton
"	17	1	Ashford	Yoerg, Henderson
*Tree Swallow	15F	3	Yates	D'Anna
"	30	2	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	31	300	Iroquois N.W.R.	Yoerg, Henderson
Carolina Wren	1-31	2	Lancaster	Morgante
"	1-31	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	1-31	2	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	9,28	1	Hamburg	Klick et al
"	13	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	28	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
"	31	2	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
Winter Wren	13	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
Golden-cr. Kinglet	29	3	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
*Ruby-cr. Kinglet	30F	1	Bush Hill S.F.	LeBlanc, DeSha
Gray Catbird	15	1	Beaver Is. S.P.	Hess
Northern Mockingbird	15,16	1	Grand Island	Burch
American Pipit	9F	1	Hamburg	Klick

<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	16	95	Eden	Andrle
"	16	55	Oakfield	Klick, Sowinski
*Eastern Towhee	27F	1	Niagara Falls	Roberson
Fox Sparrow	9;24-27	1;2 max.	Colden	Wojewodzki; K. Landau
"	10	1	Randolph	LeBlanc, Baird, Eaton
"	17	3	Ashford	Yoerg, Henderson
Dark-eyed Junco				
<i>J. h. oregonus</i>	1-31	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
*Eastern Meadowlark	6F	1	Stockton	Mosher
"	9	6	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	9	2	Hamburg	Klick
Rusty Blackbird	9	4	Golden Hill S.P.	D'Anna
"	9	6	Hamburg	Klick et al
"	10	2	Randolph	LeBlanc, Baird, Eaton
Purple Finch	30	1	Colden	Wojewodzki
Red Crossbill	22,23	1	Colden	Wojewodzki
White-w. Crossbill	9	1	Golden Hill S.P.	S&T O'Donnell
"	9	3	Yates	S&T O'Donnell
Common Redpoll	2-17	2	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	10	6	Allegheny Reservoir	LeBlanc, Baird, Eaton
"	12	2	Cuba	Hooker
Pine Siskin	1-31	3 max.	Farmersville(f)	DeSha
"	1-31	6 max.	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	13-15	2	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Evening Grosbeak	3	10	Allegheny S.P.	LeBlanc, DeSha
"	14-31	11 max.	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
"	31	2	Amity Lake	Pitzrick

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:**

**131**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:**

**13**

**Total for the year 2002:**

**144**

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Mike Morgante, 16 Lakeside Crescent, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086 (email:





Tufted Titmouse was first recognized as a breeder in New York State in the early twentieth century. In *Birds of New York* (Eaton 1914) there is only one known breeding location in New York, on Staten Island. From there the population expanded, eventually moving north into the Hudson River Valley and by 1974 was generally distributed as a breeder in Bronx, Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, and the southern halves of Orange and Dutchess Counties (Bull 1974).

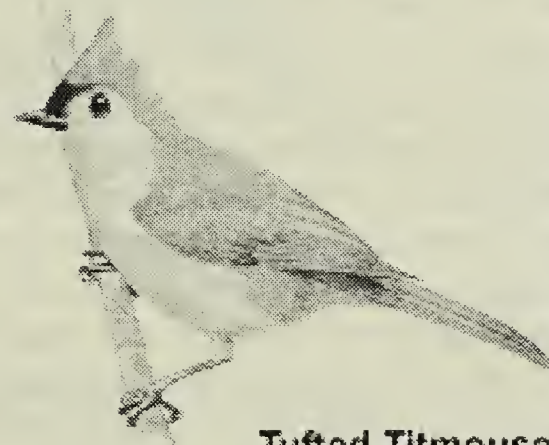
As late as 1947 it was unknown as a breeder in Chemung and Schuyler counties in the central Southern Tier of New York (Axtell 1947); the expansion of its range into central New York probably occurred after that date. In central New York, Tufted Titmice are believed to have moved up the Susquehanna River Basin (from Pennsylvania where it nested during summer "in practically every county" (Pool 1964)) and eventually spread to the Finger Lakes and Oswego River Basin as illustrated in Bull (1974).

Assuming that wintering Tufted Titmice are potential breeders in the same area, and analyzing Christmas Count data from 1950 to 1958, Stephen Eaton first suggested that the Mohawk Valley from the Hudson River Valley was not a main invasion route. Instead, the sparse Christmas Count data of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Ontario from 1950 to 1958 suggests the main invasion route may have been via the Susquehanna River valley from northwestern Pennsylvania. During the 1950 to 1958 study period the first titmice reports for Elmira, Binghamton, and Geneva were in the early 1950's, the first report for Rochester was in 1955, and those from Jamestown, Olean, and Schenectady were in the late 1950's. Buffalo, Cortland, and Syracuse did not have any count data during the study period. Unlike the Northern Cardinal's invasion from southern Ontario in the 1940's, the Tufted Titmouse shows no evidence (in 1950's Christmas Count data) of taking this invasion route from the west (Eaton 1959).

By 1974 Bull was able to identify breeding locations in 61% of the counties in New York State. It was absent from only 24 counties in three general regions: (1) Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming, Livingston, and Wayne counties in Western New York (2) Chenango, Sullivan, Delaware, Greene, Otsego, Schoharie, and Montgomery counties in and around the Catskill Plateau and (3) Fulton, Saratoga, Washington, Warren, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, Jefferson, Clinton, Franklin, Essex, and St. Lawrence counties in and around the Adirondack Mountains. The absence of breeding Tufted Titmice in some of these counties can be explained by overlooked and unreported breeding

sites, the inclement climate of higher elevations, low human population density resulting in fewer winter feeding stations, lack of forested breeding habitat, and incomplete range expansion of the breeding population of Tufted Titmouse. The absence of breeding records in Fulton and Montgomery suggests that the Hudson River population and the Susquehanna Oswego River population had not merged by 1974. The absence of titmouse breeding records in Fulton and Montgomery Counties also supports Eaton's finding that titmice did not invade central New York from the Hudson River Valley by way of the Mohawk Valley. The most northerly known titmouse breeding was at Orwell in Oswego County at the very edge of the Tug Hill Plateau in 1967 (Bull 1974).

In contrast to the Tufted Titmouse breeding range reported in Bull 1974, *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* shows evidence that Tufted Titmouse was a probable or confirmed breeder in 61 of the 62 counties in New York State from 1980 to 1985. Only St. Lawrence County lacks any evidence of breeding during this period. Even more impressive is the fact that it was confirmed as a breeder in 56 (90%) of the counties in New York State. It is classified as a probable breeder in only the Catskill Mountains in Otsego and Schoharie counties and in



**Tufted Titmouse  
by Larry McQueen**

the Adirondack Mountains in Franklin, Essex, and Lewis counties. It is difficult to ascertain whether this is a true expansion of the bird's breeding territory in New York State between 1974 and 1985. Certainly the work of over 4,000 volunteers during the 1980-1985 atlas survey resulted in the discovery and documentation of many titmouse breeding locations that would have been undiscovered and undocumented under ordinary circumstances.

It will be interesting to see if the Breeding Bird Atlas 2000 results will complete the invasion of breeding Tufted Titmouse in New York State. Already, atlasing in Western New York has produced an unprecedented late nesting of Tufted Titmice.

While atlasing block 2080D in the Town of Somerset in Niagara County on 27 June 2001, local birder, Neal Gordon showed the author a Peterson nest box containing young Tufted Titmice at his father's property at 8589 West Somerset Road. I pointed out to



Neal that since the nestlings were poorly feathered and the late nestling date for unfledged Tufted Titmouse in *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* is 30 June, these nestlings would probably exceed the current late date for unfledged juveniles. Daily observations of the adults were made as they entered the nest box to feed the nestlings. The last day that feeding activity was observed was 3 July. We opened the nest box on 5 July, and confirmed that the nestlings had fledged. Based on this evidence, it is recommended that in New York State the late unfledged juvenile date of 30 June be extended to 3 July. Since Tufted Titmice are much less common in Western New York than downstate, I would recommend that downstate observers note early and late nestlings of this species.

Neal's father, Lenord, indicated that the first pair of Tufted Titmice were observed at this location in 1983. During the 2001 breeding season Neal's mother was the first to notice the nest building activity of these late nesting Tufted Titmice. She enjoyed watching the titmice collect O-wah-chi's hair and carry it to the nest box. (O-wah-chi is Neal's very large dog.) After a brushing, Neal put the hair of O-wah-chi in the backyard, so that the birds could use it in nest building.

Titmice are brazen little birds that are notorious for going to extreme lengths to obtain hair for their nests. They are not always satisfied with lining their nests with shed dog hair or pulling the hair off a dead animal. There are some reports of these bold brave birds pulling the hair off living mammals and even humans. In his *Life Histories of North American Jays, Crows and Titmice*, Arthur Cleveland Bent wrote four extremely interesting and somewhat humorous accounts of how Tufted Titmice go about removing the hair from a squirrel, a Woodchuck, a Mrs. Vitae Kite, and a Mr. E. Irwin Smith (Bent 1946). I have often wondered why these inquisitive Tufted Titmice follow me so closely in the woods early in the nesting season. Now I know why. Beware the Tufted Titmouse during its nest building season.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Arthur Schaffner for sharing his many ideas regarding the possible causes responsible for the expansion of southern species northward, and Robert Andrie for his helpful editorial suggestions in the writing of this article.

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# BOS Field Trip to Tonawanda and Oak Orchard WMAs and Iroquois NWR

by Gail Seamans

The first day of daylight saving time, Sunday 7 April 2002, brought out two hardy birders to see the waterfowl at Oak Orchard Swamp. The trip lead by myself and my grandson Nicholas hosted Sally Castgrin and Jack Mansfield and later in the morning Delores Seamans. Even though the turnout was small we enjoyed the bright morning sunlight in 20 degree [F] temperature. Thankfully there were only light winds. Forty-eight species were identified.

We started the trip by watching the Bald Eagles on and near the newly replaced nest across from the parking area at Cayuga Pool overlook. The fierce winds in March blew down the original nest as well as the nest that the first nesting eagles used north of the Iroquois NWF office. We were pleased to observe all of the expected dabbling duck species as well as a few divers. Pied-billed Grebe and the more abundant American Coot were present. A shorebird that surely must have been a Greater Yellowlegs was seen standing next to a coot with its head and bill tucked under its wing. The size of this bird compared to the coot seemed appropriate for a Greater rather than Lesser Yellowlegs.

In the southwest pond on the Tonawanda WMA, forty-two Tundra Swans were observed feeding near the road. Great Blue Herons were seen on nests in the two rookeries, one located off of Albion Road east of Oak Orchard Creek and the other on the east side of Route 63. At the bridge over Oak Orchard Creek on the Sour Springs Road hundreds of Rusty Blackbirds flew west along the creek bank. Although Osprey was seen on the wing we saw none at Ring-neck Marsh in the fence row tree nest. A lone Canada Goose rested near the trunk in the water. We hoped that a mate has not taken over the nest again as it did two years ago, driving the ospreys away. Although there were lots of Canada Geese, many had already apparently moved to the north and we saw only small flocks in the fields.

At a rest stop at the refuge headquarters, Dorothy Gerhardt told us the eagle nest that blew down from the tree used in past years has been abandoned in favor of a new tree further away that cannot be seen from the office. We also stopped on Albion Road near the observation tower and saw the new Bald Eagle nest in the pine tree. This nest had survived the storm. No eagles were observed in or near the nest.

Species identified: Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Tundra Swan, Canada

Goose, Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, American Black Duck, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Common Snipe, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, European Starling, Northern Cardinal, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Rusty Blackbird, and Common Grackle.



## Young Birder Program

by Ed Ratajczak

Did we rest on our "feathers?" Was our "horoscope" off? Perhaps it was bad karma! Whatever the reasons, this year's program, despite the fantastic foundation of two previous years, was almost a complete bust. *No participants came on Saturday! Three (3) people arrived late on Sunday.* (Time change). Dave Cooper, Mike Galas, Mike Hamilton, Brendan Klick, Gail Seamans, Jim Wojewodzki and I commiserated over and analyzed the situation. Whether it was poor communication between all parties involved, or just because it was the week of Easter/Spring break, we may never know. We all agreed it wasn't the weather, as in former years, the eager participants went birding in the rain. Should we try to do it again next year? Since I brought my lunch both days, went birding and saw my first Northern Harrier at Tifft on Sunday, naturally I'm biased to answer, "Why Not!"





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## **May-June-July-August Calendar**

**May 28: How to Atlas Breeding Birds.** An evening trip. Leader: Mike Morgante (alternate leader: Chuck Rosenberg). Location: Rheinstein Nature Preserve at 6:30 PM. Pre-registration required (683-4819).

**May 31-June 2: Allegany Nature Pilgrimage.** Adults \$30.00. To register fill out the internet form at <http://www.buffaloaudubon.org/links.php>.

**June 7: Friday. Canadian Whip-poor-will and Chinese Dinner.**

Leader: Bill Burch 773-3690. Meet at Vermont and Busti at 6 p.m. We will eat in the Lotus Garden Restaurant in Port Colborne, Ontario. This is at 182 West Street, on the west bank of the Welland Canal. Then we go to Wilson Road, which is four miles west of town. Reservations appreciated.

**June 9: Southern Tier Field Trip to New Hudson and Rushford Townships in Allegany County for Clay-colored Sparrow and Prairie Warbler.** Co-leaders: Brendan Klick and Don Harris. Meet 7:30 AM at the Burger King in Springville, NY on Route 219.

**June and July. NYS Breeding Bird Atlas.** For information contact Dick Rosche (E-mail, [drosche@juno.com](mailto:drosche@juno.com); telephone, 652-8409).

**July 28: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

**August 18: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker at (716) 745-9129 or E-mail [TerryYonker@cs.com](mailto:TerryYonker@cs.com).

**August 25: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Alec Humann (tentative). Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

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# The PROTHONOTARY



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Volume 68, No. 5 May, 2002

### THE MONTH: April

by Bill Watson

April was wet and wild with 4.38 inches of precipitation (1.34 inches above normal), confirmed tornadoes in Allegany and southern Erie counties on the 28th, and wide swings in temperature. The average temperature was 46.2 [F], a degree above normal.

Significantly fewer rare bird reports were received and verified by the BOS statisticians in April, 2002 (26), compared to April, 2001 (58). Temperature-wise, the first seven days of April were seven degrees below average, April 8-19 were an amazing fourteen degrees above normal, while the last eleven days were seven degrees below normal. It is during the last third of April that many early migrants typically arrive requiring written verifications. The freezing temperatures during this period quite likely slowed migration. Not only was migration slowed, but fruit blossoms were damaged and leaf development was arrested. In spite of this, there were still many significant sightings, especially between the dates of April 8 and 19.

At 1:25 p.m. on April 11 at the Ripley Hawkwatch, Leonard DeFrancisco, William Dietz, Thomas Simmons, and Jack Sherwood observed a light-morph juvenile Ferruginous Hawk, riding the warm south winds! This is the first record for this species in the

BOS study area, and brings the total number of bird species documented to 385. The Ferruginous Hawk (our largest North American buteo) was observed soaring with four Turkey Vultures, three Red-tailed

Hawks, two Sharp-shinned Hawks, and two American Kestrels providing excellent size comparison. This bird was described in part by Leonard DeFrancisco as having a "white throat, belly, and tail" and "long whitish wings tapered from the wrist to the tips. Darkish tips near the end of the primaries and dark commas near the wrists. The underwing coverts had some dark spotting from the commas to the wing pits."

During the BOS April Count on the 14th, Willie D'Anna documented an immature Trumpeter Swan at Six Mile Creek Marsh in the Town of Porter. Immature Trumpeter and Tundra Swans can be very difficult to distinguish, and his verification report contained photographs of the bird as well as a like-aged Tundra Swan to illustrate the differences between these two confusing species. Its origin is unknown and it is our first April record besides a possible (hypothetical) record of a Trumpeter Swan shot at Tiffit Farm in April, 1863. Since the latter specimen was lost, we cannot be sure it was not the more common Tundra Swan, lacking the yellow spots at the base of the bill (Beardslee and Mitchell 1965). This record is only the sixth occurrence of Trumpeter Swan in our area and the first on an April Count.

Another rarity on the BOS April Count was a Black-headed Gull seen by Gordon Bellerby at Niagara-on-the-Lake at 6:36 in the evening. He describes it as a larger gull with "dark underwing primaries" flying above a group of Bonaparte's Gulls. "In previous years I have had similar sightings of Black-headed Gulls just above a flock of Bonaparte's Gulls usually in the forefront as was this bird." (Now we all know the secret as to how to find Black-headed Gulls.) This is the third latest record for this species.

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Two rare subspecies were documented in April. A breeding plumaged adult "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler (*D. c. auduboni*) was well documented and videotaped at Goat Island in Niagara Falls by Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter on April 27th. In the field they noticed the "bright yellow chin and throat," lack of a "darker facial patch," and "a large white patch on the greater coverts" between the two white wing bars. These features distinguish this subspecies from our "Myrtle" form of Yellow-rumped Warbler. The only other record of this extremely rare subspecies was documented by Vivian Pitzrick on April 26, 1986 in Amity.

The other rare subspecies was that of a

Dark-eyed Junco, *J. h. oregonus* or "Oregon Junco." Bob Andrie observed this bird at his feeder in Eden Valley from November 1, 2001, until April 3, 2002. This may be the same "Oregon Junco" that visited his feeder last winter from November 21, 2000 until April 4, 2001. The author has also observed, presumably, the same individual juncos at his feeder that leave and return at similar times each year. These birds were probably hybrids of Oregon and Slate-colored forms of Dark-eyed Junco giving them a readily distinguishable and unique plumage. Based upon these experiences, the author predicts the Oregon Junco visiting Andrie's feeder, if still alive, will likely return there during the 2002-3 winter season.

The Annual B.O.S. April Bird Count continued two distinct trends: the steady increase in numbers of more

southern species and record breaking numbers of early migrants. There were 24 new April Count highs. All of the traditional southern species that have shown a northward expansion over the last several decades were counted at record highs: Great Egret, 11; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 132; Tufted Titmouse, 191; Carolina Wren, 44; Northern Mockingbird, 46; Northern Cardinal, 1143. For the first time ever, a total of four warbler species were recorded on an April Count: Yellow-rumped Warbler, 19; Pine Warbler, 9 (previous count high was 3); Palm Warbler, 2 (first time more than one); and Louisiana Waterthrush, 3 (first time more than one). The two Blue-headed Vireos recorded were the third earliest BOS records; the only other record from an April count was in 1999. A House Wren documented by Donna DeLeon at the Tillman Road State Wildlife Management Area is the first ever April Count record. This House Wren, and one found by Betsy Brooks in Alfred on April 14, 1992, are the earliest dates recorded in our region. The three Louisiana Waterthrushes and three Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are the earliest multiple records of these species.

Although a record number of warblers was tallied on the April Count, the month ended with only a near-average eleven warbler species, a little better than the ten year April average of 10.8 warbler species. Will we ever again have an April like that in 1990 when Noteworthy Records boasted 19 warbler species? The temperature on April 28th of that spring reached a high of 94.

Despite the cooler weather at the end of the month there were still four early records at Tifft Nature Preserve. (1) On April 25th, Ed Ratajczak found an Orange-crowned Warbler on Rabbit Run east. The only earlier record was one found on April 22, 1945 at Morgan's Point, Ontario, by Arthur Schaffner. (2) At the same date and place a Least Flycatcher was documented by the author. This record and the one found on April 25, 1990 in East Aurora by Linda Holmes are the earliest records for this species. (3) A Warbling Vireo, also found on the 25th by the author, is the earliest record in 56 years. (4) The Yellow Warbler recorded by Mike Morgante on the 21st is only predated by Gordon Meade's sightings on April 20, 1941 at Oak Orchard. Other unusually early records were an April 7th Peregrine Falcon at the Hamburg Hawkwatch, an April 18th House Wren in Lancaster, the April 20th Palm Warbler at Tifft Nature Preserve, and the April 21st Northern Waterthrush (only three earlier arrivals) also at Tifft. Although the Merlin records of

(continued on page 53)



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	7	23	Four Mile Creek S.P.	D'Anna
Common Loon	4	2	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	4	1	Lime Lake	DeSha
"	7	6	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Morgante et al
Pied-billed Grebe	7	6	South Park Lake	Schultz
Horned Grebe	3	7	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	4	100	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	7	2	South Park Lake	Schultz
Red-necked Grebe	7	14	Four Mile Creek S.P.	D'Anna
D.-crested Cormorant	4	2	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	4	13	Ischua Creek Dam	DeSha
"	5	35	Buffalo	D'Anna
"	12	120	Reef Lighthouse	Watson
"	24,25	521,444	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
*American Bittern	6F	1	Machias	DeSha
"	21;25	1;1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante; Watson
Great Blue Heron	3,18	49,99	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
*Great Egret	3,12,18	3,9,15	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
"	9	1	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	9	1	Farmersville	DeSha
Green Heron	15	1	Times Beach N.P.	Harris
"	20	1	Conewango WMA	DeSha
Black-cr. Night-Heron	3,12,18	6,17,32	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
"	6	117	Niagara Falls	D'Anna
Snow Goose	18	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Tundra Swan	4-6	1	Machias	DeSha
"	25	2	Wales	Bee
Canvasback	4	4	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Redhead	1	13	Allegany	DeSha
"	2	6	Lime Lake	DeSha
"	4	10	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Ring-necked Duck	4	500	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	6	140	Brocton Reservoir	Mosher
"	7	57	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Lesser Scaup	4	2500	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Surf Scoter	12	1	Times Beach N.P.	Watson
"	16	2	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Galas, Rising
Long-tailed Duck	21	380	Lewiston	Klick et al
Bufflehead	4	500	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Hooded Merganser	4	50	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Ruddy Duck	4	5	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	10;16	18;81	Iroquois N.W.R.	Hess; Galas, Rising



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	18	4	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
Osprey	3,24	1,9	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	5	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	10	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	28	1	Tifft N.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
Bald Eagle	7,21	1,2	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Klick
"	16	2 imm.	Iroquois N.W.R.	Galas, Rising
"	22	1 imm.	Lancaster	Morgante
*Northern Goshawk	27	1	Tifft N.P.	Harris
*Broad-winged Hawk	17F,24	92,268	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson, Galas
*Ferruginous Hawk	11	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	DeFrancisco, Dietz
Rough-legged Hawk	7	6	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Klick
"	12	1	Langford	Harris
"	20	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Merlin	<u>2,6,9</u>	2,3,1	Buffalo(UB)	Yoerg
"	12F,16	1,1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Klick
Peregrine Falcon	<u>7F</u>	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Klick
"	24	2	Buffalo (Statler)	Yoerg
Virginia Rail	17	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
American Coot	4	250	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Greater Yellowlegs	16	3	Wolcottsville	Galas, Rising
"	30	16	Hartland	Watson
Lesser Yellowlegs	16	16	Wolcottsville	Galas, Rising
"	30	56	Hartland	Watson
*Spotted Sandpiper	15F	1	Times Beach N.P.	Harris
"	30	1	Hamburg	Andrle
Little Gull	10	10	Niag.-on-the-Lake	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	Lewiston	Yoerg, Henderson
Bonaparte's Gull	4	10	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	5,14	4980,2940	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	19,20	1,1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Iceland Gull	6	1	Goat Island	D'Anna
"	21	1	Lewiston	Klick et al
Lesser Black-b. Gull	6	3	Goat Island	D'Anna
"	<u>30</u>	1	Somerset	Watson
Glaucous Gull	3	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Bellerby
*Caspian Tern	12F	3	Times Beach N.P.	Watson
"	13	1	Golden Hill S.P.	Fox
"	13	4	Olcott	Fox
"	20	12	Dunkirk Harbor	Harris
Common Tern	18	2	Tonawanda	Watson
"	18	2	Hamburg	Andrle
Long-eared Owl	2,8,9	2,2,1	Wilson-Tusc. S.P.	Potter
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	2	1	Wilson-Tusc. S.P.	Potter
"	7,9	1	Four Mile Creek S.P.	Potter
Chimney Swift	17F	1	Eden	Harris
"	18	2	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	19	1	Hamburg	Andrle
Red-headed Wdpkr.	2	2	Porter	Galas et al
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	9F	1	Forest Lawn Cemetery	Hess
"	12	7	Tifft N.P.	Watson
*Least Flycatcher	<u>25F</u>	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	30	1	Tifft N.P.	Harris
Eastern Phoebe	1	1	Wheatfield	Potter
*Gr. Cr. Flycatcher	27F	1	Tifft N.P.	Harris
*Eastern Kingbird	27F	1	Times Beach N.P.	Harris
Blue-headed Vireo	23,24	2,1	Ward	Brooks
"	25	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
*Warbling Vireo	<u>25F</u>	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
"	30	4	Tifft N.P.	Harris
Common Raven	2,6,10	1,2,1	Alfred	Brooks
*Purple Martin	7F	2	Ripley Hawkwatch	Yoerg
*N. Rough-w. Swallow	10F	2	Youngstown	D'Anna
"	12	3	Buffalo Harbor	Watson
Bank Swallow	21	1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante
*Barn Swallow	9F	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	10	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson, Galas
Carolina Wren	1-30	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	5	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	7,16	1	Hamburg	Klick
"	12	1	Beaver Is. S.P.	Hess
"	12	2	Tifft N.P.	Watson
"	13	1	Times Beach N.P.	Fox
"	27	1	Williamsville Glen	Morgante
"	30	1	Goat Island	Roberson
House Wren	<u>18</u>	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	19	1	Buffalo	Harris
"	21	1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	20	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	21	1	Goat Island	Yoerg
Hermit Thrush	2	1	Wilson-Tusc. S.P.	Potter
"	9	1	Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	12	3	Tifft N.P.	Watson
*Wood Thrush	28F	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
Gray Catbird	1	1	Beaver Is. S.P.	Galas et al
"	8	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
Northern Mockingbird	12	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
Brown Thrasher	15	1	Hamburg	Andrle
American Pipit	6	10	Harmony	Berry
*Orange-cr. Warbler	<u>25F</u>	1	Tifft N.P.	Ratajczak
*Nashville Warbler	30F	1	Tifft N.P.	Harris
*Yellow Warbler	21F	1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante
"	26	2	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
*Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	28F	1	Forest Lawn Cemetery	Yoerg, Henderson
*Yellow-rump. Warbler				
<u>D. c. auduboni</u>	27	1	Goat Island	Potter, D'Anna
*Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	27F	1	Williamsville Glen	Morgante
"	30	1	Tifft N.P.	Harris
*Blackburnian Warbler	30F	1	Tifft N.P.	Harris
*Pine Warbler	13F	1	Krull Park	Fox
"	20	3	Four Mile Creek S.P.	D'Anna et al
"	20	1	Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	20	2	Olcott	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	2	Goat Island	Yoerg, Henderson

<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Palm Warbler	20	2	Goat Island	D'Anna et al
"	21	1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante
"	23	1	Forest Lawn Cemetery	Hess
*Black-and-white Warb.	30F	2	Tifft N.P.	Harris
*Northern Waterthrush	21F	1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante
Eastern Towhee	9	1	Forest Lawn Cemetery	Hess
"	12;24	1;2	Tifft N.P.	Watson; Yoerg
Amer. Tree Sparrow	17	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
*Chipping Sparrow	9F	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
*Field Sparrow	10F	1	Colden	Wojewodzki
*Vesper Sparrow	7F	3	Busti	Berry
"	9	1	Pomfret	Mosher
*Savannah Sparrow	5F	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
Fox Sparrow	5	1 banded	Alfred	Brooks
"	11	5	R.T. Peterson Inst.	Berry
"	12	4	Tifft N.P.	Watson
Swamp Sparrow	10F	3	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Hess
Dark-eyed Junco				
<i>J. h. oreganus</i>	1-3	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
*Rose-br. Grosbeak	29F	2	R.T. Peterson Inst.	Berry
"	29F,30	1,2	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
*Baltimore Oriole	30F	1	Tifft N.P.	Harris
Purple Finch	5	1 banded	Alfred	Brooks
"	5-30	7 max	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	10	1	Harmony	Berry
"	11	1	Clarence	Morgante
"	17-25	3	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
"	20	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	24	1	Hamburg	Yoerg
Red Crossbill	2-5	1	Colden	Wojewodzki
Common Redpoll	1	2	Lancaster	Watt
"	4L	1	Colden	Wojewodzki
Pine Siskin	1-30	3 max.	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
"	1-30	9 max	Colden	Wojewodzki
"	20	3	Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	20	19	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	28	1	Hamburg	Morgante
"	28	1	Tifft N.P.	Yoerg
Evening Grosbeak	1-30	35 max.	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
"	15,26	5,2	Alfred	Brooks
"	19,26,27	2,1,1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	24	1	Hamburg	Yoerg

<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue (including April Count):</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Total for the year 2002:</b>	<b><u>189</u></b>

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Mike Morgante, 16 Lakeside Crescent, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086 (email: Morgmmm@AOL.com).



(continued from page 48)

April 2, 6, and 9 are before their usual arrival date, these are actually late wintering birds. The only bird lingering after its normal departure date was the Lesser Black-backed Gull on April 30th at Somerset.

At the Hamburg Hawkwatch there were 4642 raptors in April highlighted by 65 Osprey, 43 Northern Harriers, 442 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 76 Cooper's Hawks, 5 Merlins, and 2 Peregrine Falcons. Although there were 321 Broad-winged Hawks on April 16th, there was a monthly total of only 925 probably due to the north winds and generally inclement weather from April 19th to 30th when Broad-winged Hawk numbers normally peak (*see Hamburg Hawk Watch* below).

I would like to acknowledge the following sources for providing information and suggestions in the writing of The Month. Beardslee, C. S. and Mitchell. 1965. Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region. Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, vol. 22. Kevin McLaughlin, National Weather Service, Buffalo, New York. David Suggs, BOS Noteworthy Data Base custodian, Willie D'Anna, Jim Landau, Robert Andrie, and The Prothonotary editorial staff.

## Great Egret Color Banding at Motor Island

*by Bill Watson*

On June 17 between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., twenty nestling Great Egrets were banded at the Motor Island heron colony by Dr. D. V. Chip Weseloh, Wildlife Biologist for Canadian Wildlife Service-Ontario Region, Mark Kandel, Senior Wildlife Biologist for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and the author.

I had requested that the Great Egrets be color banded in the hope that Buffalo Ornithological Society members and others might be able to learn something about their post-breeding dispersal and migration. Great Egret numbers sometimes increase at Iroquois NWR after those at Motor Island depart, but past numbers of summer Great Egrets at Iroquois NWR also clearly indicate that many are not coming from Motor Island. Among numerous potential migration routes, they could move east through Iroquois NWR and Montezuma NWR to the Atlantic Flyway, west to the Mississippi Flyway, or south toward Pennsylvania. Post breeding dispersal could be in any direction.

Great Egret nestlings were observed at one nest on

May 22nd and on a second nest May 28th of this year, so the oldest nestlings could fledge as early as June 25th. Please look for Great Egrets with a leg band above the knee of the left leg that are RED WITH WHITE LETTERS AND NUMBERS. They also have the traditional aluminum bands on the right leg above the ankle. If you see these birds please record the band information and report this to one of the following:

D. V. Chip Weseloh  
Canadian Wildlife Service-Ontario Region  
4905 Dufferin St.  
Downsview, Ontario  
M3H 5T4  
Phone: 416-739-5846  
email: chip.weseloh@ec.gc.ca.

Mark Kandel  
NYSDEC  
270 Michigan Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
Phone (716) 851-7010  
mxkandel@gw.dec.state.ny.us

## Hamburg Hawk Watch: Spring 2002 Report

*By Jim Landau*

The cold air that swept into the region at the end of February proved to be an inauspicious, if unofficial start to the Spring 2002 Hamburg Hawk Watch. Just four days were covered that month, yielding 17 Turkey Vultures, 3 Cooper's Hawks and 70 Red-tailed Hawks.

The National Weather Service reports that there were numerous instances of heavy snowfall in March as well as some memorable high wind events and many days of mixed precipitation. Seven days were "scrubs" due to weather. Numbers-wise, March produced the season's highs of Turkey Vultures (5798), Red-shouldered Hawks (192) and Red-tailed Hawks (581). It also produced the season's only two Northern Goshawks and the only Golden Eagle. The break in the weather at the end of March however, gave us some of the best hawk watching of the season.

April continued the trend of see-sawing weather patterns with a mild stretch sandwiched between cold, wet weather periods at each end of the month. There were only nine "mostly sunny" days, presenting a challenge for thermal-loving migrant raptors. Nonetheless, April produced many of this season's note-



worthy “high count” observations, including 65 Osprey, 43 Northern Harriers, 442 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 76 Cooper’s Hawks, 925 Broad-winged Hawks, 11 Rough-legged Hawks, 38 American Kestrels, 5 Merlins, and 2 Peregrine Falcons.

May weather continued to be wet, cool and gloomy at the outset. With committed watch coverage only extending through May 10th, the month failed to generate any “high count” species.

This season the Hamburg Hawk Watch enjoyed the benefit of improved coverage from a dedicated group of volunteers who were willing to commit their time, skills and enthusiasm. My thanks to Mike Hamilton, Mike Zebehazy, Fran Rew, Bob Andrie, Mike Davis, Mike Galas, Bill Watson, Brendan Klick, Linda Holmes, Bruce Chilton, Alec Humann, Doug Happ, and Connie Adams. They were aided on many days by numerous visitors who lent their birding skills when things were busy and their conversational skills when things were not. Fran Rew and Bob Andrie, in addition to contributing watch time, generously shared their considerable expertise, perspective and fellow-

ship throughout. Their contribution cannot be overstated.

A total of 12,237 raptors were seen over 66 days of coverage, with 341 hours of watch time logged. However, the challenging weather patterns this spring were by no means as cooperative in providing good flight days as our volunteers were in providing good coverage. For example, this year’s Broad-winged Hawk season total of 1132 is less than half the number observed in 2001, despite logging over twice the number of observer hours! While it is certainly true that “you can’t see them if you’re not out *looking*” it is also true that “you can’t see them if they aren’t there.” Just where the Broad-winged flights were and what routes they took to get there are, of course, two of the puzzles hawk watches are attempting to solve. As one watch site among many on the Central Continental Flyway as defined by HMANA (Hawk Migration Association of North America) the data produced at the Hamburg Hawk Watch contributes to the bigger picture that furthers our understanding of hawk migration patterns.

The table below outlines the season month by month.

2002 SEASON	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	Total
Coverage [hrs/month]	12.16	118.75	164.23	46.33	341.47
Coverage [days/month]	4	24	28	10	66
Turkey Vulture	17	5798	2448	242	8505
Osprey	0	2	65	36	103
Swallow-tailed Kite	0	0	0	0	0
Bald Eagle	0	7	8	8	23
Northern Harrier	0	13	43	9	65
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	89	442	80	611
Cooper's Hawk	3	38	76	12	129
Northern Goshawk	0	2	0	0	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	192	24	2	218
Broad-winged Hawk	0	0	925	207	1132
Short-tailed Hawk	0	0	0	0	0
Red-tailed Hawk	70	581	479	93	1223
Ferruginous Hawk	0	0	0	0	0
Rough-legged Hawk	0	9	11	1	21
Golden Eagle	0	1	0	0	1
American Kestrel	0	25	38	12	75
Merlin	0	0	5	2	7
Peregrine Falcon	0	0	2	0	2
Unid. Accipiter	0	3	15	3	21
Unid. Buteo	0	15	24	11	50
Unid. Eagle	0	0	1	0	1
Unid. Falcon	0	0	1	0	1
Unid. Raptor	0	2	35	10	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>6777</b>	<b>4642</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>12237</b>



# Report of the 2002 Annual B.O.S. April Bird Count

April 14, 2002

Coordinator / Compiler: Mike Hamilton, Weather: Terry Yonker

**Weather Synopsis:** A confusing weather pattern existed over the count area on the day of the count. A high pressure cell was located off the east coast with small lows centered over Prince Edward Island and northern Minnesota. Strung out between the lows was a quasi-stationary front that hung around Buffalo for most of the day. Winds and precipitation were erratic. Skies varied between broken and overcast. Precipitation, where it occurred, included light rain, mist, drizzle and occasional imbedded thunderstorms, generally south of the front. Some areas saw sun, but others did not. The front appeared to move south of Buffalo by early morning and back north of Buffalo by early afternoon.

## Greater Buffalo International Airport Sunrise: 6:36 AM      Sunset: 7:58 PM

TIME	WEATHER	TEMP	DEW PT	PRESSURE	DIR/WIND	REMARKS
12:00 am	Light Drizzle/Mist	46	46	30.15	SSW 5	
3:00 am	Mist	48	48	30.10	SSE 3	Stationary front moves south of BUF
6:00 am	Mist	48	48	30.07	E 7	
9:00 am		54	52	30.03	ESE 3	
12:00 pm		62	56	29.97	S 7	Stationary front moves north of BUF
3:00 pm	Light Rain/Mist	57	57	29.90	S 6	
6:00 pm	Light Rain/Mist	59	59	29.86	SE 7	
9:00 pm		58	57	29.86	SW 5	

**Compilation:** The following is a list of species recorded on the count together with the number of individuals tabulated. Bold face names indicate species for which acceptable written verification forms were received. **F** represents first and **L** last dates for the spring migration, \* first date for the year. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers are given in parentheses.

### Loons - Ducks

Red-throated Loon	11		Mallard	1,104
Common Loon	74		Blue-winged Teal	123
Pied-billed Grebe	94		Northern Shoveler	170
Horned Grebe	98		Green-winged Teal	79
Red-necked Grebe	12	(4,5,13)	Canvasback	41
Double-crested Cormorant	740		Redhead	31
American Bittern	2	(10,24)	Ring-necked Duck	1,091
Great Blue Heron	534		Greater Scaup	54
Great Egret	11	(9,10)	Lesser Scaup	8439
Green Heron	*F 1	(14)	unspecified scaup	7 (17,21)
Blk.-crowned Night-Heron	7	(3,9)	White-winged Scoter	164
Turkey Vulture	264		Black Scoter	1 (1)
Snow Goose	7	(4,13,27)	unspecified scoters	10 (4)
Canada Goose	19,714		Long-tailed Duck	290
Mute Swan	11		Bufflehead	6,712
<b>Trumpeter Swan</b>	1	(3)	Common Goldeneye	174
Tundra Swan	18		Hooded Merganser	113
Wood Duck	304		Common Merganser	171
Gadwall	85		Red-breasted Merganser	4,694
American Wigeon	111		Ruddy Duck	996
American Black Duck	21		unspecified waterfowl	24 (4)

### Raptors - Coots

Osprey	17		unspecified buteo	2 (1,12)
Bald Eagle	5	(5,22,24)	American Kestrel	178
Northern Harrier	39		Merlin	2 (2,7)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	77		Ring-necked Pheasant	28
Cooper's Hawk	30		Ruffed Grouse	21
Northern Goshawk	2	(26)	Wild Turkey	223
Red-shouldered Hawk	5		Virginia Rail	*F 4 (2,3,12)
Red-tailed Hawk	230		American Coot	808

**Doves - Swallows**

Killdeer	499		Ring-billed Gull	43,221	
Greater Yellowlegs	12	(5,7,20)	Herring Gull	4,536	
Lesser Yellowlegs	*F 6	(2,4,13)	Iceland Gull	1	(8)
Dunlin	*F 2	(4)	Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	(8)
Common Snipe	113		Glaucous Gull	2	(8)
American Woodcock	28		Great Black-backed Gull	195	
Little Gull	2	(2,3)	unspecified gulls	2	(2)
<b>Black-headed Gull</b>	1	(2)	Caspian Tern	25	
Bonaparte's Gull	6,087		Common Tern	*F 28	

**Doves - Swallows**

Rock Dove	1,183		Eastern Phoebe	410	
Mourning Dove	2,412		Northern Shrike	1	(28)
Eastern Screech-Owl	10		Blue-headed Vireo	*F 3	(3,17)
Great Horned Owl	18		Blue Jay	1,061	
Barred Owl	* 5		American Crow	2,863	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	(28)	Common Raven	3	(28)
Belted Kingfisher	112		Horned Lark	98	
Red-headed Woodpecker	5	(3,28)	Purple Martin	137	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	132		Tree Swallow	1,788	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	90		N.Rough-winged Swallow	283	
Downy Woodpecker	351		Bank Swallow	*F 2	(1,10)
Hairy Woodpecker	109		Cliff Swallow	*F 1	(27)
Northern Flicker	898		Barn Swallow	*F 74	
Pileated Woodpecker	35				

**Chickadee - Waxwing**

Black-capped Chickadee	1,258		Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	*F 3	(4,20)
Tufted Titmouse	191		Eastern Bluebird	252	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	64		Hermit Thrush	28	
White-breasted Nuthatch	248		American Robin	8,514	
Brown Creeper	72		Gray Catbird	7	
Carolina Wren	44		Northern Mockingbird	46	
Winter Wren	16		Brown Thrasher	*F 23	
<b>House Wren</b>	*F 1	(10)	European Starling	13,611	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	360		American Pi[pit	153	(5,12,13)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	104		Cedar Waxwing	354	

**Warblers - House Sparrows**

Yellow-rumped Warbler	19		Dark-eyed Junco	1,580	
Pine Warbler	9		Snow Bunting	30	(28)
Palm Warbler	*F 2	(12)	Northern Cardinal	1,143	
<b>Louisiana Waterthrush</b>	*F 3	(18,24)	Red-winged Blackbird	8,149	
Eastern Towhee	42		Eastern Meadowlark	256	
American Tree Sparrow	123		Rusty Blackbird	310	
Chipping Sparrow	360		Common Grackle	8,636	
Field Sparrow	82		Brown-headed Cowbird	934	
Vesper Sparrow	16		Purple Finch	154	
Savannah Sparrow	216		House Finch	649	
Fox Sparrow	22		Common Redpoll	2	(23)
Song Sparrow	1,929		Pine Siskin	19	
Swamp Sparrow	221		American Goldfinch	722	
White-throated Sparrow	124		Evening Grosbeak	115	
White-crowned Sparrow	15	(19,20,28)	House Sparrow	1,346	

**SUMMARY:**      **Total Species Observed**      **148**      **Number of Observers**      **226**  
**Total Individual Birds Observed**      **167,703**



**COMPARATIVE INFORMATION:** Associated charts, available from Michael Hamilton, compare this year's records with those for 1993-2002 and those for 1935-2002. A chart listing totals for each species per section for 2002 is also available.

**INDIVIDUAL SPECIES SINCE 1935:** Highest count: (Numbers in parenthesis indicate the average) Great Egret, 11(1); Lesser Scaup, 8,439 (783); Bufflehead, 6712 (866); Ruddy Duck, 996 (64); Virginia Rail, 4 (0 -seen on only 11 previous counts); Mourning Dove, 2412 (713); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 132 (15); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 90 (19); Pileated Woodpecker, 35 (10); Blue-headed Vireo, 3 (0 -seen on only 1 previous count); Northern Rough-winged Swallow, 283 (8); Tufted Titmouse, 191 (27); Carolina Wren, 44 (4); Northern Mockingbird, 46 (5); Brown Thrasher, 23 (2); Pine Warbler, 9 (0 -seen on only 5 previous counts); Palm Warbler, 2 (0 -seen on only 4 previous counts); Louisiana Waterthrush, 3 (0 -seen on only 4 previous counts); Chipping Sparrow, 360 (38); Swamp Sparrow, 221 (34); Northern Cardinal, 1143 (360).

**First count sightings:** Double-crested Cormorant, 740; Trumpeter Swan, 1; House Wren, 1

**Lowest count:** Black Duck, 21 (7% of the average)

**Miscellaneous:** Northern Pintail, 0 (first time none have been recorded); Black-headed Gull, 1 (3 previous sightings: 1 each in 1959, 1982, and 1995); Lesser Black-backed Gull, 1 (3 previous sightings: 1 each in 1992 and 1996 and 3 in 2000)

**OBSERVERS:(Section compilers are printed in bold face.)**

Section 1: David Cooper, **Lynne Landon**, Terry Yonker

Section 2: Brian Ahara, Gordon Bellerby, June Hooey, Diana Laubitz, Doug MacGowan, Betty Oka, Karin Schneider, Maggie Smiley, Al Smith

Section 3: **Willie D'Anna**, Jerry Farrell, Susan O'Donnell, Tom O'Donnell, Betsy Potter, Mike Turisk

Section 4: Mark Schlacter, **Bill Watson**

Section 5: Don Brasure, Bill Burch, Don Harris, **Brendan Klick**, Bob Lipp

Section 6: **Jerry Chapple**

Section 7: Edward Fuchs, **Mike Hamilton**, Jack Mansfield, Sonja Mansfield

Section 8: **Mike Zebehazy**

Section 9: Mary Benham, Paul Benham, Michael Galas, Sylvia Galas, Debbie Milleville, Susan M. O'Donnell, Thomas M. O'Donnell, **Gerry Rising**, Joe Stein

Section 10: Edward Crohn, Donna Deleon, Robert Deleon, Mary Ann Stegmeier, John Welte, Martha Welte

Section 11: **Michael Davis**, Chuck Rosenburg

Section 12: Ann M. Bauer, Marion Bee, Paul Fuhrmann, Linda Holmes, Mark Morgante, **Mike Morgante**, Marlene Phillips, Ruth Phillips, Sr., Ruth Phillips, Jr., Anne Vogt

Section 13: Douglas Beattie, Elaine Dart, Kurt Fox, Tad Gerace, Eileen Hull, Robert Hull, Marie Johnson, Aron Kehlenbeck Sr., Zeke Kehlenbeck, Aron Kehlenbeck Jr., Tyler Kehlenbeck, Alice McKale, Dolores Seamans, **Gail Seamans**

Section 14: Lois Abbot, Robert Andrie, Ken Brandes, Joanne Dobbler, Phyl Hansen, Doug Happ, Erma Kern, Bob Leonard, Glenna Leous, Mark Leous, Sandy Radigan, **Barb Walker**, Margaret Wooley

Section 15: **Bill Bogacki**, Dennis Russell

Section 16: Patricia Andrie, Robert Andrie, Tom Connare, Audrey Horbett, **Frances Rew**, Joe Thill

Section 17: John Filor, **Robert Wagner**

Section 18: **Bruce Chilton**, Michael Desha, James Landau, Karen Landau

Section 19: Allegany County Bird Club: Ron Andrews, Leora Arnold, Faye Clancy, Shirley Cooper, Barbara Cronk, Gladys Hotchkiss, Lyle Hotchkiss, Roxie Lates, Dora Lilly, Joan MacEwan, Roger Nicholson, Teresa Rork, Linda Roth, **Elaine Smith**, Marian Smith, Max Smith, Wilma Saylor, Millie Thayer, Ann Vaclavik, Ann Voss, Jay Wilson, Jean Wilson, **Larry Wilson**, Richard Wilson, Roseanna Wilson

Section 20: Lake Erie Bird Club: Chris Budniewski, Ray Budniewski, **Paul Farver**, Joanne Goetz, Tom Goetz, Joe Gula, Dale Losher, Terry Mahoney, Richard Miga, Terry Mosher, Lucille Neveau, Marilyn O'Connell, Tom O'Connell, Robert Peterson, Beverly Ruska, John Ruska, Audrey Schafer, Doris Welch, Tom Welch

Section 21: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jessie Nelson, Joanne Nelson, Bill Seleen, **Bob Sundell**

Section 22: Jim Berry, Seth Berry, Ranjit Laha, Linda O'Brien, Bill Sleen, **Bob Sundell**

Section 23: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Ruth Lundin, Jean Pigman, Bill Seleen, Tom Simmons, **Bob Sundell**

Section 24: **Tim Baird**, Thomas LeBlanc

Section 25: **Tim Baird**, James VanScoy, Regina VanScoy

Section 26: Allegany County Bird Club: **Doris Burton**, Frances Hunt, Mary Jordan, Ann Scott, Morris Scott, Bruce Smalley

Section 27: Allegany County Bird Club: Russell Allen, **Doris Burton**, Norman Ives, Helen Link, Wilma Sanford, Jake Strong

Section 28: Allegany County Bird Club: Mallery Adams, Mary Adams, Russell Allen, Dan Babcock, Harold Babcock, Ellen Baker, Carol Behn, Wayne Brewster, Elizabeth Brooks, Debbie Bucholz, Ken Burdick, **Doris Burton**, Mary Lou Cartledge, **Diane Converso**, Paul Culley, Kate Cushing, Mark Cushing, Audrey Dunham, Peggy Eisenhardt, Peter Finlay, Terry Finlay, John Gradoni, Geri Hills, Ralph Hills, Elsie Kent, Lash family, Kathleen MacDonald, Marion McClure, Mary Ormsby, Lyle Palmiter, Sean Phelan, Ann Pipal, Bob Pipal, Vivian Pitzrick, Dan Ramsey, Evelyn Ramsey, Dan Rase, Peggy Rase, Ona Reynolds, Nancy Rouse, Sandy Scofield, Cathy Sorochin, Terah Soule', Bruce Taggart, Wilma (Mrs. Bruce) Taggart, Wilma Taggart, Mary Lu Wells, **Suzanne Wood**





**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 1020 Humboldt Parkway  
 Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## June-July-August Calendar

**June and July. NYS Breeding Bird Atlas.** For information contact Dick Rosche (E-mail, drosche@juno.com; telephone, 652-8409).

**July 28: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

**August 18: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker at (716) 745-9129 or E-mail TerryYonker@cs.com.

**August 25: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Alec Humann (tentative). Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

### Art Schaffner (1927-2002)

On May 14, one of the finest field ornithologists on the Niagara Frontier died. Art Schaffner was, until illness overcame him, probably the most active birder in this region. A longer tribute to him is planned and BOS members who knew Art are encouraged to communicate their thoughts about him to Bill Burch who will be organizing these materials.

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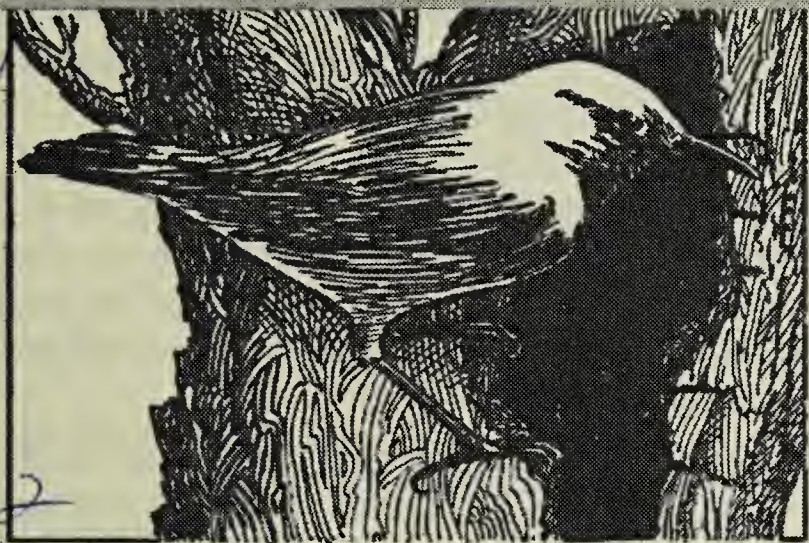
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# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 68, No. 6 June, 2002

### THE MONTH: May

*by Gerry Rising*

This May was cold and wet. The average temperature was 51.8°F, 5.2° below normal. Until the 27th when I was finally able to put away my long johns, there were only three days when the thermometer rose to the 70s. On six of them, including the May Count day on the 19th, the highs were in the 40s and on ten they were in the 50s. Lows followed the same dismal pattern with the temperature dropping to a degree below freezing on the 4th. Before the 28th, only three days, the 6th, 7th and 9th, had average temperatures above normal and not one of them was on a weekend when birders are more active.

As I write this in a parched mid-July, it is hard to believe that we had over 5.2 inches of rain in May, almost two inches above normal for the month. And we were not surprised to find ourselves in a brief snow flurry on count day; it snowed briefly the next day as well. Rain fell on 20 of the month's 31 days, including those three early days when the temperature rose to above average. As a result, birders found no good migration fall-outs (although Richard Sowinski and Peter Yoerg had a good 16 warbler species in Amherst State Park on the 9th) and complaints were common. Big day birders were especially unhappy but their

totals were, if not record-breaking, as usual still very impressive.

There was, however, a good side to this foul weather. Foliage was delayed as was the insect hatch. Even as late as the count day,

some tree species like the ashes still allowed good bird observing. And I do not recall a year when I heard so many reports of numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at feeders. One caller asked if it was unusual to have the dozen that were crowding his trays. I believe that this unusual phenomenon was due to the difficulty that these birds were having finding animal food. Normally at this time of year in preparing their bodies for raising young nearly half their diet should have been insects.

And the BOS May Count, now in the capable hands of Bob DeLeon, was certainly successful. With a commendable number of species and a near record number of individuals, it demonstrated once again how our personal expectations are contradicted. Of course, another factor is involved as well. Because the count is always held on a Sunday, the date drifts one day later each year (two days in Leap Years) until it finally has to jump earlier many days to start the progression again. Although we birders are always excited when May arrives, it is mid-month and later when the highest species counts are produced.

For personal reasons (new hearing aids) I found this the best May in years and, despite the complaints, I think that it was indeed a good month for birding. By the end of it our regional species/subspecies total stood at 263 and there were many exciting birds found. A late Red-necked Grebe was identified in Section 1 and a Glossy Ibis in Section 4 on the May Count. A non-birder (whose name I have unfortunately not retained) informed me that she had two white pelicans near her cottage on Lake Ontario. After some searching by many observers, three American White Pelicans were verified on the 14th. The Ripley Hawkwatch produced two exciting raptors: a Missis-

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Mississippi Kite on the 5th and a Black Vulture on the 6th. Several Merlins and peregrines were reported and the downtown Buffalo peregrines continue to thrive. And what seemed to me more than our usual number of spring shorebirds appeared, most notably 19 Red Knots at Iroquois on the 24th and 4 Wilson's Phalaropes at the Smithville Sewage Lagoons on the 26th. Count Section 6 had a Laughing Gull. Two individual Sandhill Cranes put in an appearance, one at the Hamburg Hawk-watch on the 5th and one at Iroquois on the 11th. Warblers for the month included Prothonotary, Worm-eating, Kentucky and chat. Several Orchard Orioles were recorded and Alice McKale had an

five other reports, max 4 on the 7th. Common Moorhen: 5 on the count, singles on the 3rd and 18th. Black-billed Cuckoo: 6 on the count, 1 on the 24th and 2 on the 27th. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 1 on the count, 1 on the 24th. (How far off I may be in these comments is suggested by the single Eastern Screech-Owl reported during the month when we know that there are hundreds of these delightful little evening whistlers around.) But even if the numbers for these other birds are not truly representative of the status of these species, they all appear to be in decline here on the Niagara Frontier.

Finally, I am impressed once again with the renaissance of birding activity represented by the number of individual month compilations turned in (25), by the number of May Count participants (239) and by the number of filed written verifications (39). I single out Linda Holmes among our regular reporters. She extends her almost daily reports from East Aurora, in the process providing us with our best small area survey. But unfortunately there also remains a downside to our coverage: we continue to be embarrassed by the participation in the rest of our count sections by that always impressive Section 28 (led once again by Doris Burton, Diane Converse and Suzanne Wood) where over 50 observers were involved. The BOS count sections are large, each one well over 100 square miles in extent (about 3/4ths the size of an entire Christmas Count circle), and yet we had two sections "censused" by one observer, three by two, seven by three and two by four. I challenge those section leaders with few observers to at least double the number of teams afield in their sections this October.

unusual three different Lincoln's Sparrows at her Eggertsville feeder.

It is difficult to prize out information about low numbers from the reports because some species are considered too common to annotate. For example, Blue-winged Teal, a formerly common marsh resident of this region, received few reports, the largest number, 21, coming as would be expected on the region-wide May Count. The average May Count for these teal during the 1970s was 96. On last year's May Count only 12 were recorded. A number of other species fit this same category. American Bittern: only 4 on the count; the only other report, 1 on the 18th. Least Bittern: missed on the count, the only May report 1 on the 24th. Virginia Rail: 2 on the count, five other reports, max 4 on the 1st. Sora: 9 on the count,





## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	11	1	Golden Hill S.P.	D'Anna
"	18	4	Somerset	D'Anna et al
Common Loon	1,2	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	17	1	Middlebury	Morgante
"	24	10	Yates & Carlton	Klick, Harris
"	24	2	Allegany S.P.	Cook
"	26	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
Horned Grebe	26L	1	Point Breeze, L. Ont.	Fox et al
* <u>Amer. White Pelican</u>	14	3	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna
D.-crested Cormorant	3,22	140,278	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
"	8,25	190,180	Reef Lighthouse	Watson
"	20	99	Strawberry Island	Watson
"	26,30	335,238	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
American Bittern	1,4	1,1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
"	12	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	18	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Morgante et al
*Least Bittern	24F	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
Great Blue Heron	11	150	Iroquois N.W.R.	Fox
Great Egret	4	1	Sheridan	Neveu
"	5,20;22	21,13;2 yg.	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson
"	16	1	Wales	Bee
"	25;27	3;3	Tifft N.P.	Watson; Yoerg
"	26	5	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
Green Heron	28	6	Evangola S.P.	Turisk
Black-cr. Night-Heron	6	48	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
* <u>Black Vulture</u>	6	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	DeFrancisco
Brant	12F	4	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16-20	2	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
Mute Swan	11	1 on nest	Olcott	D'Anna, Potter
"	12-26	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson; Fox; Morgante
"	24	1	Point Breeze, L. Ont.	Klick, Harris
Tundra Swan	12,17	4,4	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
American Wigeon	25	1	Times Beach N.P.	Watson
"	26	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
American Black Duck	18	3	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante et al
Northern Shoveler	21	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson, Klick
"	24	4	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
"	26	15	Batavia WWTP	Fox et al
Northern Pintail	15	2	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
Green-winged Teal	26	1	West Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	3	Batavia WWTP	Fox et al



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Canvasback	11	1	Batavia WWTP	Fox
Redhead	4,12	14,8	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	21	9	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Watson
"	26	1	West Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Ring-necked Duck	8	8	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	21	3	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson; Morgante
Greater Scaup	11	1	Batavia WWTP	Fox
"	14,16;24	1;5	Niagara Falls	D'Anna; Klick
Lesser Scaup	4,18;26	100,10;5	Batavia WWTP	Morgante; Fox
"	18	8	Niagara Falls	Morgante et al
"	21,24	1,1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
"	24	1	New Hudson	Cook
"	26	4	Attica Reservoir	Fox et al
White-winged Scoter	2	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	21L	2	Somerset	Klick, Watson
Long-tailed Duck	21L	7	Somerset	Watson, Klick
"	21L	7	Yates	Klick, Watson
Bufflehead	14-18	3	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
"	18	1	Somerset	Morgante et al
"	21	2	Shadigee	Watson
"	21	2	Yates	Klick, Watson
"	26L	1	Pt. Breeze, L. Ont.	Fox et al
Common Goldeneye	14;24	3;1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna; Klick
"	17	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	26L	1	Pt. Breeze, L. Ont.	Fox
Common Merganser	21	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Watson
"	21	3	Niagara Falls	Klick, Harris
Ruddy Duck	4;11,26	200;141,50	Batavia WWTP	Morgante; Fox
"	21;24	13;16	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick et al
"	26	4	West Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Osprey	17	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	21	1	Yates	Klick, Watson
"	21	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	24	2	Allegany S.P.	Cook
* <u>Mississippi Kite</u>	5	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	DeFrancisco,M&S Free- borough
Bald Eagle	11;18	4 imm.;2	Somerset	D'Anna; Morgante et al
"	15	2 imm.	Lakeside Beach S.P.	Potter, D'Anna
"	16	2 imm.	Golden Hill S.P.	Morgante
"	21;26	6;5	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson; Morgante
Red-shouldered Hawk	5	nest w. yg.	Bush Hill S.F.	Yoerg, Henderson
Broad-winged Hawk	1	139	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	27	1	Bennington	Morgante
Merlin	1	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	5	1	Chaffee	Yoerg, Henderson
"	<u>18L</u>	1	Krull Park	Turisk, Morgante, D'Anna
Peregrine Falcon	16	1	Golden Hill S.P.	Morgante
"	<u>21L</u>	1	Yates	Klick
"	<u>24</u>	1	Niagara Falls	Klick
*Sora	7F	4	Tifft N.P.	Watson
"	11	3	Cheney Swamp	Berry
*Common Moorhen	3F	1	Pomfret	Neveu



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	18	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	5	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Klick
"	11	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Jones
*Black-bellied Plover	4E,12,26	1,1,1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	11	1	Kiantone	Klick, Harris
*Semipalmated Plover	11F	1	Arkwright	Klick, Harris
"	11F	4	Kiantone	Klick, Harris
"	12;24	35;38	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante; Klick, Harris
Greater Yellowlegs	4;12;24	20;40;2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante; Watson; Klick
Lesser Yellowlegs	4,12;26	100,75;2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante; Fox
*Solitary Sandpiper	1F	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	6	2	Lancaster	Morgante
"	24L	1	Yates	Klick, Harris
*Upland Sandpiper	4F	2	Hartland	Potter, D'Anna
"	24	2	Tillman W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
*Whimbrel	24F	17	Clarence	Klick, Harris
"	26	27	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
*Ruddy Turnstone	4E,26	1,8	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	15;24	1;7	Iroquois N.W.R.	D'Anna; Klick
"	26	10	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
*Red Knot	15F	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	D'Anna; Fox
"	24	19	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
"	24	7	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
*Sanderling	16F	12	Golden Hill S.P.	Morgante
"	26	5	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
*Semipalm. Sandpiper	11F	1	Kiantone	Klick, Harris
"	24	58	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
"	26	70	Smithville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
*Least Sandpiper	4F,12	2,100	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	11	27	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	17	60	Smithville, Ont.	Watson, Rising
*White-r. Sandpiper	15F;26	1;2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Potter,D'Anna; Fox et al
*Pectoral Sandpiper	4F	1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
"	17;24L	4;1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante; Klick
Dunlin	4F,12;25	30,125;250	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante; Fox
"	18;21	8;23	Yates	Morgante; Watson, Klick
"	26	75	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	100	Smithville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
*Short-b. Dowitcher	12F,17;25	32,40;1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante; Fox
"	15	2	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
"	18	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante et al
Common Snipe	17;24	2;1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante; Klick
"	24	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
*Wilson's Phalarope	17;26	1;4	Smithville, Ont.	Watson; Yoerg
"	24;26	2;1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick; Morgante
Bonaparte's Gull	26	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
Lesser Black-b. Gull	18	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Morgante
Glaucous Gull	16	1	Olcott	Morgante
Caspian Tern	10	56	Dunkirk Harbor	Neveu
"	16	8	Olcott	Morgante
"	24	2	Yates	Klick, Harris
Forster's Tern	18F	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante, Turisk, D'Anna



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
*Black Tern	4F	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	16	1	Shadigee	Morgante
"	24	11	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
Black-billed Cuckoo	24	1	Tonawanda Ind. Res.	Klick, Harris
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	24	1	Tonawanda Ind. Res.	Klick, Harris
Common Nighthawk	23	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	24	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
"	29-31	2	Blasdell	Turisk
"	30;31	1;1	Buffalo	Yoerg; Galas
"	30	2	Orchard Park	Zebehazy
*Whip-poor-will	7F	1	Tifft N.P.	Turisk
"	12	1	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
*Ruby-t. Hummingbird	5F	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	6	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Red-headed Wdpr.	5;25	1;1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante; Watson
"	7	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	9,26	1	Lakeside Beach S.P.	Fox
"	11,29	1,1	Como Park	Morgante
"	11	1	Sheridan	Klick, Harris
"	11	6	Point Gratiot	Klick, Harris
"	12,14	1,1	Hamburg	Andrle
"	12,26	1,1	Long Beach, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	18,19	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	25	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Fox
"	28	3	Evangola S.P.	Turisk
Pileated Woodpecker	11	1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
"	28	1 @ nest	Reinstein Preserve	Morgante(BOS)
*Olive-s. Flycatcher	22F	1	Jamestown	Berry, Lyons
*Eastern Wood-Pewee	12F	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	15	1	Goat Island	Klick, Harris
*Yellow-b. Flycatcher	12F;25	1;2	Goat Island	D'Anna; Morgante
"	22	2	Tifft N.P.	Andrle
"	24	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	24	3	Amherst S.P.	Yoerg
"	26	1	Tonawanda Ind. Res.	Morgante
"	26	1	Ward	Brooks
"	28	1	Evangola S.P.	Turisk
"	29	1	Lewiston	D'Anna, Potter
*Acadian Flycatcher	12F	1	Watts Flats WMA	Berry
"	22,26	1,1	Attica	Fox
Alder Flycatcher	24	1	Allegany S.P.	Cook
"	24	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
*Willow Flycatcher	9F	1	Carlton	Fox
"	16	1	Golden Hill S.P.	Morgante
Gr. Cr. Flycatcher	2	1	Snyder	Klick
Eastern Kingbird	1	1	Busti	Berry
Blue-headed Vireo	17	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	24	1	Ridgeway	Klick, Harris
*Yellow-thr. Vireo	11F	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
"	12	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	24	1	Allegany S.P.	Cook
"	27	1	Hill Higher S.F.	Berry

<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	28	1	Evangola S.P.	Turisk
*Philadelphia Vireo	7F	1	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna
"	16	1	Goat Island	Watson
"	17-27	9 other rpts	throughout WNY	various observers
*Red-eyed Vireo	6F	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	7	1	Goat Island	Potter
Blue Jay	9	1500	Lakeside Beach S.P.	Fox
Common Raven	5	3	Bush Hill S.F.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	11	2	Ward	Brooks
"	18	1	<u>Attica Reservoir</u>	Morgante, Turisk, D'Anna
"	24	1	Allegany S.P.	Cook
"	24	1	New Hudson	Cook
Cliff Swallow	9,30	26,40 44nst.	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
"	17,26	6,1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
Brown Creeper	17,18	2,1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante et al
"	25	1	Chautauqua	Berry
"	26	3	Ward	Brooks
"	27	3	Darien	Morgante
Carolina Wren	1-31	13 reports	throughout WNY	many observers
*Marsh Wren	3F	1	Pomfret	Neveu
"	4	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
Golden-cr. Kinglet	12,17,18	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	24L	1	Carlton	Klick, Harris
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	7	2 bldg. nest	Como Park	Morgante
"	28	1 on nest	Evangola S.P.	Turisk
Eastern Bluebird	17	1	Tifft N.P.	Andrle
*Veery	5F	1	Tifft N.P.	Morgante
"	6	4	Tonawanda	Hess
"	6	1	Forest Lawn Cemetery	Yoerg
*Gray-cheeked Thrush	12F	1	Amherst S.P.	Morgante
"	15	1	Tifft N.P.	Andrle
"	15	2	Goat Island	Klick
"	30,31L	9,3	over Buffalo	Yoerg
*Swainson's Thrush	6F	2	Tonawanda	Hess
"	25	1	Goat Island	Morgante
Hermit Thrush	9	15	Lakeside Beach S.P.	Fox
"	18,26L	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante et al
Wood Thrush	2	2	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Gray Catbird	5F	8	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna, Potter
Northern Mockingbird	8	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
Brown Thrasher	17	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
American Pipit	2,9	35,30	Hamburg	Andrle et al
"	17;18	6;1	Somerset	Morgante
"	24L	1	Newfane	Klick, Harris
"	24L	1	Ridgeway	Klick, Harris
*Blue-winged Warbler	5F	1	Goat Island	Roberson
"	6	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	6	1	Forest Lawn Cemetery	Yoerg
*Golden-wing. Warbler	18F	1	Tifft N.P.	Fox
"	24	1	Yates	Klick, Harris
"	25,26	3,1	Oak Orchard W.M.A.	Fox
*"Brewster's Warbler"	5F	1	Goat Island	Fox; Turisk, D'Anna



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	6	1	Lake Erie S.P.	Neveu
"	11	1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
*Tennessee Warbler	6F	3	Goat Island	Roberson
"	9	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
Orange-cr. Warbler	6	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	7	1	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna
"	8;12	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	8,9,17	1,1,1	Amherst S.P.	Yoerg
"	12	1	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
Nashville Warbler	3	1	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
"	27	1	Attica	Morgante
"	27	1	Orangeville	Morgante
*Northern Parula	7F	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	10	2	Sherman	Neveu
"	17,21,25L	4,4,3	Goat Island	Roberson
"	24	1	Allegany S.P.	Cook
"	25	1	New Hudson	Cook
*Chestnut-s. Warbler	6F	1	Goat Island	Watson, Roberson
"	6F	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
*Magnolia Warbler	5F	1	Amherst S.P.	Morgante
"	5F	1	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna, Potter
*Cape May Warbler	5F	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson et al
"	6	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	21L	1	Goat Island	Roberson
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	2	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	25L	5	Goat Island	Morgante
Yellow-r. Warbler	28	3	Evangola S.P.	Turisk
Blackburnian Warbler	5	2	Amherst S.P.	Morgante
"	5	9	Bush Hill S.F.	Yoerg, Henderson
Pine Warbler	5	2	Bush Hill S.F.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	6	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	7	1	Como Park	Morgante
"	10	1	Beaver Is. S.P.	Hess
"	16;24	1;1	Krull Park	Morgante; Klick
"	28	1	Evangola S.P.	Turisk
*Prairie Warbler	6F	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	22,26	1,1	Pike	Fox
"	25	1	New Hudson	Cook
Palm Warbler	11	15	Silver Creek	Berry
"	23L	1	Goat Island	Roberson
*Bay-breasted Warbler	7F	1	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna, Turisk
"	7F	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	27L	1	Orangeville	Morgante
*Blackpoll Warbler	12F	1	Hamburg	Andrle
"	12F	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	17,27L	3,7	Goat Island	Roberson
"	26	8	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
*Cerulean Warbler	7F	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	17	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
Black-and-white Warb.	1	1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
*American Redstart	7F	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	9	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson

<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
*Prothonotary Warbler	8	1	<u>Lancaster</u>	Morgante et al
* <u>Worm-eating Warbler</u>	5	1	Port Weller, Ont.	Bellerby
"	5	1	Goat Island	Fox, D'Anna, Turisk, Klick
*Ovenbird	3F	1	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
"	5	2	Tifft N.P.	Morgante
"	5	8	Bush Hill S.F.	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Waterthrush	17,26	5,3	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	27	3	Bennington	Morgante
La. Waterthrush	16	1	Attica	Turisk
"	24	1	Allegany S.P.	Cook
* <u>Kentucky Warbler</u>	15	1	Golden Hill S.P.	D'Anna
*Mourning Warbler	10F	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	16	1	Attica	Turisk
*Common Yellowthroat	6F	1	Lancaster	Morgante
*Hooded Warbler	5F	1	Hamburg	Andrle
"	7	1	Tifft N.P.	Turisk
"	7	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	23,27,29L	1,1,1	Tifft N.P.	Watson
*Wilson's Warbler	7F	1	Tifft N.P.	Turisk, D'Anna
"	9	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	9	1	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
"	27L	1	Darien	Morgante
*Canada Warbler	10F	1	Sherman	Neveu
"	12	1	Goat Island	Potter, D'Anna
*Yellow-br. Chat	16	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	26	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante
"	26	1	Tifft N.P.	Andrle
*Scarlet Tanager	6F	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	7	1	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna, Turisk
"	7	1	Goat Island	Potter
Amer. Tree Sparrow	<u>24L</u>	1	Yates	Klick, Harris
Vesper Sparrow	17	1	Bethany	Morgante
*Grasshopper Sparrow	17F	1	Bethany	Morgante
"	17F	2	Middlebury	Morgante
"	24	3	Tillman W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
*Henslow's Sparrow	7;24	4;2	Lancaster	Morgante; Klick, Harris
*Lincoln's Sparrow	5F;6	1;3	Tifft N.P.	Morgante; Andrle
"	6	1	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	12;20;22	1;1;1	Eggertsville	McKale
"	17	3	Amherst S.P.	Yoerg
"	24	1	Lakeside Beach S.P.	Klick, Harris
"	24	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
White-thr. Sparrow	7	350	Tifft N.P.	D'Anna, Turisk
"	28L	1	Reinstein Preserve	Morgante(BOS)
White-cr. Sparrow	3F	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	4	1	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
*Indigo Bunting	10F	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	12	1	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
*Bobolink	3F	2	Pomfret	Neveu
"	4	2	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
Rusty Blackbird	17	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	<u>26L</u>	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Fox et al
*Orchard Oriole	11F;16	3;1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter; Morgante
"	11F;18	1;1	Golden Hill S.P.	D'Anna, Potter; Morgante
"	24	1	Carlton	Klick, Harris
"	26-31	2	<u>Eden Valley (f)</u>	Andrle
"	26	2	Rock Point P.P.	Yoerg, Henderson
Baltimore Oriole	1	2	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Pine Siskin	1-13	6 max.	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
"	1-26	7 max.	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	3-18	10 rpts.	throughout WNY	many observers
"	4	15	Silver Creek	Neveu
"	18	6	Carlton Hill MUA	Morgante et al
American Goldfinch	16	300	Krull Park	Morgante
Evening Grosbeak	1-13	28 max.	Franklinville(f)	DeSha
"	18	1	Krull Park	Morgante et al

<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue (including May Count):</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Total for the year 2002:</b>	<b><u>263</u></b>

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Mike Morgante, 16 Lakeside Crescent, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086 (email: Morgmmm@AOL.com).

# 66<sup>th</sup> Buffalo Ornithological Society May 19, 2002 Bird Count

*Compiled by Robert L. DeLeon*

## Weather Synopsis (provided by National Weather Service, Buffalo, NY)

Sunrise: 05:49 EDT    Sunset: 20:35 EDT    Lake Temperatures: Erie 50 [F], Ontario 51 [F]

Time [EDT]	Wind [mph]	Visibility [mi.]	Weather	Air Temp [F]	Dew Pt. [F]	Precip. [in.]
23:54	N 3	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	37	36	
22:54	Calm	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	38	34	
21:54	W 5	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	38	35	
20:54	N 8	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	37	35	
19:54	N 9	10:00	Light Rain	39	36	
18:54	W 8	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	43	30	
17:54	SW 10	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	43	31	
16:54	W 12	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	43	31	
15:54	SW 14	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	44	31	
14:54	SW 13	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	42	31	
13:54	SW 16	10.00	Light Rain	42	31	
12:54	Vrb1 7	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	44	27	
11:54	W 12	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	42	29	
10:54	W 13	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	42	24	
09:54	W 10	10.00	A Few Clouds	42	26	
08:54	NW 9	10.00	Partly Cloudy	41	26	
07:54	NW 8	10.00	Partly Cloudy	38	31	
06:54	W 6	10.00	Partly Cloudy	36	31	
05:54	W 5	10.00	Partly Cloudy	34	29	
04:54	NW 7	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	37	29	
03:54	W 8	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	37	29	
02:54	NW 10	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	38	28	
01:54	NW 12	10.00	Overcast	38	28	
00:54	N 8	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	39	31	
23:54	NW 6	10.00	Mostly Cloudy	39	28	

**Daily Weather Summary:**    Max Temp. 45 [F]    Min. Temp. 34 [F]    Precipitation 0.00 [in.]

**Total Number of Species Observed:**    **206**

**Total Number of Individual Birds Observed:**    **106,632**

**Notable Count Highs:** The number of species (206) is the sixth largest total recorded since record-keeping began in 1935. The number of individuals (106,632) was the second largest total on the May count. Fifteen individual species were recorded at their highest total ever: Great Blue Heron (472), Great Egret (23), Ruddy Duck (96), Bald Eagle (13), Ring-billed Gull (34,880), Caspian Tern (191), Ruby-throated Hummingbird (294), Red-bellied Woodpecker (126), Tree Swallow (3899), No. Rough-winged Swallow (1612), Tufted Titmouse (159), Carolina Wren (39), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (70), No. Mockingbird (32), and Pine Warbler (10). Nine other species also were recorded at their second highest total since the count began.

**Notable Species:** Glossy Ibis, second record on May count. Laughing Gull, second record on May count.

**Notable Count Lows:** In spite of the large overall numbers of individuals, a number of species were recorded in very low numbers: Ring-necked Pheasant (14), lowest ever; Killdeer (315), lowest since 1963; Horned Lark (10), second lowest ever; Hermit Thrush (5), lowest since 1962; Wood Thrush (201), lowest since 1962, Cerulean Warbler (2), tied for the lowest ever, Field Sparrow (107), lowest since 1941; Vesper Sparrow (2), tied for the lowest ever, Bobolink (497), lowest since 1963.

The following is a list of species seen on the count followed by the total number observed. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers appear in parentheses. Boldface names indicate species for which acceptable written verifications were received. F and L represent the first and last dates for the spring migration. \* represents the first record for the year.



<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Section</u>
<b><u>Loons-Ducks</u></b>			<b><u>Plovers-Terns</u></b>		
Common Loon	42		Black-bellied Plover	14	(6,8)
Pied-billed Grebe	25		Semipalmated Plover	20	
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>	1	(1)	Killdeer	315	
unidentified grebe species	2		Greater Yellowlegs	7	
Double-crested Cormorant	2087		Lesser Yellowlegs	14	
American Bittern	4		unidentified Yellowlegs	1	
Great Blue Heron	472		Solitary Sandpiper	21	
Great Egret	23		Spotted Sandpiper	96	
Green Heron	34		Upland Sandpiper	3	(6,13)
Black-crowned Night-Heron	48		Whimbrel	2	(6)
<b>*Glossy Ibis</b>	1	(4)	Ruddy Turnstone	5	(6,7)
Turkey Vulture	327		Red Knot	4	(6)
Canada Goose	3664		Sanderling	3	(6)
Brant	163		Least Sandpiper	110	
Mute Swan	3	(5,16)	White-rumped Sandpiper	2	(7,10)
Tundra Swan	2	(13)	Dunlin	530	
Wood Duck	108		Short-billed Dowitcher	19	(8,11)
Gadwall	12	(3,8,10)	Common Snipe	2	(26)
American Wigeon	5	(10)	American Woodcock	7	
American Black Duck	5	(2,4,8)	unspecified shorebirds	2	
Mallard	917		Bonaparte's Gull	186	
Blue-winged Teal	21		Ring-billed Gull	34880	
Northern Shoveler	15	(10,13)	Herring Gull	390	
Green-winged Teal	11	(10,11)	Great Black-backed Gull	176	
Canvasback	2	(9,13)	<b>Laughing Gull</b>	1	(6)
Redhead	19	(10,13)	Caspian Tern	191	
Ring-necked Duck	3	(10,12)	Common Tern	257	
Greater Scaup	29		Black Tern	25	(5,8,10)
Lesser Scaup	23	(7,11,26)	<b><u>Doves-Swallows</u></b>		
unidentified Scaup	5		Rock Dove	1395	
White-winged Scoter	69	(1,4)	Mourning Dove	1377	
Long-tailed Duck	25		*Black-billed Cuckoo <b>F</b>	6	(13,20)
Bufflehead	67		*Yellow-billed Cuckoo <b>F</b>	1	(19)
Hooded Merganser	18		Eastern Screech-Owl	1	(13)
Common Merganser	33		Great Horned Owl	15	
Red-breasted Merganser	325		Barred Owl	1	(20)
Ruddy Duck	96		*Common Nighthawk <b>F</b>	4	(5,21)
<b><u>Raptors-Coots</u></b>			Chimney Swift	221	
Osprey	9		Ruby-throated Hummingbird	294	
Bald Eagle	13		Belted Kingfisher	73	
Northern Harrier	16		Red-headed Woodpecker	24	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	18		Red-bellied Woodpecker	126	
Cooper's Hawk	10		Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	50	
Red-shouldered Hawk	14		Downy Woodpecker	299	
Broad-winged Hawk	10		Hairy Woodpecker	98	
Red-tailed Hawk	196		Northern Flicker	267	
Rough-legged Hawk	1	(6)	Pileated Woodpecker	32	
American Kestrel	57		Eastern Wood Pewee	25	
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>	2	(10,11)	Acadian Flycatcher	3	(14)
Ring-necked Pheasant	14		Alder Flycatcher	1	(5)
Ruffed Grouse	32		Willow Flycatcher	13	
Wild Turkey	77		Least Flycatcher	55	
Virginia Rail	2	(9,11)	unidentified empidonax	14	
Sora	9		Eastern Phoebe	229	
Common Moorhen	5	(10,11,26)	Great Crested Flycatcher	114	
American Coot	41		Eastern Kingbird	311	
			White-eyed Vireo	1	(20)

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Section</u>
Yellow-throated Vireo	9		Blackburnian Warbler	56	
Blue-headed Vireo	21		Pine Warbler	10	
Warbling Vireo	114		Prairie Warbler	1	(28)
Philadelphia Vireo	17		Palm Warbler	27	
Red-eyed Vireo	163		Bay-breasted Warbler	35	
Blue Jay	1440		Blackpoll Warbler	20	
American Crow	2048		Cerulean Warbler	2	(7,11)
Common Raven	9	(18,25,28)	Black-and-White Warbler	28	
Horned Lark	10		American Redstart	158	
Purple Martin	1961		Ovenbird	125	
Tree Swallow	3899		Northern Waterthrush	17	
No. Rough-winged Swallow	1612		Louisiana Waterthrush	1	(11)
Bank Swallow	1280		Mourning Warbler	2	(12,17)
Cliff Swallow	148		Common Yellowthroat	330	
Barn Swallow	4089		Hooded Warbler	46	
unidentified swallow	1500		Wilson's Warbler	32	
<b><u>Chickadees-Waxwings</u></b>			Canada Warbler	13	
Black-capped Chickadee	910		<b><u>Tanagers-Sparrows</u></b>		
Tufted Titmouse	159		Scarlet Tanager	80	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	73		Eastern Towhee	117	
White-breasted Nuthatch	224		Chipping Sparrow	888	
Brown Creeper	16		Field Sparrow	107	
Carolina Wren	39		Vesper Sparrow	2	(7,28)
House Wren	341		Savannah Sparrow	98	
Winter Wren	2	(1,20)	Grasshopper Sparrow	3	(7,28)
Marsh Wren	36	(10,11)	Song Sparrow	1275	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	15		Lincoln's Sparrow	6	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	52		Swamp Sparrow	82	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	70		White-throated Sparrow	165	
Eastern Bluebird	243		White-crowned Sparrow	249	
Veery	69		unidentified sparrow	2	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	(11)	Dark-eyed Junco	181	
Swainson's Thrush	31		Northern Cardinal	760	
Hermit Thrush	5		Rose-breasted Grosbeak	616	
Wood Thrush	201		Indigo Bunting	93	
American Robin	4745		Bobolink	497	
Gray Catbird	827		Red-winged Blackbird	5463	
Northern Mockingbird	32		Eastern Meadowlark	144	
Brown Thrasher	29		Rusty Blackbird	7	(13,28)
European Starling	5595		Common Grackle	3135	
American Pipit	4	(15)	Brown-headed Cowbird	614	
Cedar Waxwing	158		Orchard Oriole	10	(6,7,20)
<b><u>Warblers</u></b>			Baltimore Oriole	666	
Blue-winged Warbler	50		Purple Finch	194	
Golden-winged Warbler	1	(21)	House Finch	519	
Tennessee Warbler	23		Pine Siskin	102	
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	(5,11)	American Goldfinch	2428	
Nashville Warbler	24		Evening Grosbeak	40	
Northern Parula	12		House Sparrow	1214	
Yellow Warbler	1337		unidentified birds	5	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	149				
Magnolia Warbler	123				
Cape May Warbler	8				
Black-throated Blue Warbler	67				
Yellow-rumped Warbler	305				
Black-throated Green Warbler	104				



**Observers (Section compliers in boldface.)**

- Section 1:** Lynne Landon, Jim Wojewodzki  
**Section 2:** Michael Davis  
**Section 3:** Jerry Farrell, Margret Hoff, Julie Horne, William Horne, Patty Kornacker, Neil Patterson, Jr., Neil Patterson, Sr., Susan Race, **Donald Roberson**, Tim Simon, John Welte, Martha Welte  
**Section 4:** Neal Gordon, Mark Schlacter, Paul Schnell, **Bill Watson**  
**Section 5:** Bill Burch, Olive Burch, Don Harris, **Brendan Klick**  
**Section 6:** Jerry Chapple, Nina Chapple, Rob Dobos  
**Section 7:** Blayne Farnan, Jean Farnan, **Mike Hamilton**, Jim Rozanski, Kayo Roy, Liz Wells  
**Section 8:** Doug Happ, **Mike Zebehazy**  
**Section 9:** Ann Bauer, Karen Bauer, Paul Benham, Willie D'Anna, Mandy Dragoo, Mike Galas, Sylvia Galas, Ron Hackert, Sue Hackert, Debra Milleville, Betsy Potter, **Gerry Rising**  
**Section 10:** Donna DeLeon, **Robert L. DeLeon**  
**Section 11:** **Ed Crohn**, Barbara Henderson, Alec Humann, Marie Johnson, Alice McKale, May Ann Stegmeier, Peter Yoerg, Paul Ziebarth, Virginia Ziebarth  
**Section 12:** Alan Baczekiewicz, Ann M. Bauer, Marion Bee, Nancy Clucas, Jackie Isgro, Nancy Oaks, Marlene Phillips, Ruth Phillips, Jr., Ruth Phillips, Sr., Tim Putnam, **Gail Seamans**, Edwin Stohrer, Evan Thomas, Anne Vogt, Donna Wieland  
**Section 13:** Doug Beattie, Elaine Dart, Denise Fox, Kurt Fox, Tad Gerace, Charles Graney, Eileen Hull, Robert Hull, Aron Kehlenbeck, Sr., Aron Kehlenbeck, Jr., **Jane Mason**, Marc Mason, **Max Mason**  
**Section 14:** Lois Abbott, Robert Andrle, Ken Brandes, Jim Covina, Joanne Dobbler, Marian Dornhaffer, Caroline Goff, Phyl Hansen, Robert Leonard, Glenna Leous, **Barbara Walker**, Margret Wooley  
**Section 15:** **Bill Bogacki**, Ed Ratajczak, Dennis Russell  
**Section 16:** Robert Andrle, **Francis Rew**, Joseph Thill  
**Section 17:** Dave Jarmuz, Nick Sly, **Robert Wagner**  
**Section 18:** **Bruce Chilton**, Jim Landau, Karen Landau  
**Section 19:** Ron Andrews, Leora Arnold, Lucille Bailey, Shirley Casper, Faye Clancy, Barbara Cronk, Lyle Hotchkiss, Roxie Lates, Dora Lilly, Joan MacEwan, Cynthia Moyles, Roger Nicholson, John Raybuck, Teresa Rork, Linda Roth, Pauline Schmit, **Elaine Smith**, Marian Smith, Max Smith, James Talbott, Millie Thayer, Ann Vaclavik, Ann Voss, Jay Wilson, Jean Wilson, **Larry Wilson**, Richard Wilson, Roseann Wilson  
**Section 20:** Chris Budniewski, Ray Budniewski, Irene Coon, **Paul Farver**, Joanne Goetz, Tom Goetz, Joe Gola, Terry Mahoney, Richard Miga, Terry Mosher, Lucille Neveau, Bob

Peterson, Beverly Ruska, John Ruska, Fran Smith, Doris Welch, Tom Welch

- Section 21:** Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jessie Nelson, Joanne Nelson, Bill Seleen, **Bob Sundell**  
**Section 22:** Ranjit Laha, Linda O'Brien, **Bob Sundell**  
**Section 23:** Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jean Pigman, **Bob Sundell**  
**Section 24:** **Tim Baird**  
**Section 25:** **Tim Baird**, Harriet Donnelly, Stephan W. Eaton, Arlene Knittle, Jeff Reed, James Van Scoy, Regina Van Scoy  
**Section 26:** **Doris Burton**, Frances Hunt, Mary Jordan, Ann Scott, Morris Scott  
**Section 27:** Russell Allen, Dan Babcock, Harold Babcock, **Doris Burton**, Norman Ives, Helen Link  
**Section 28:** Mallery Adams, Mary Adams, Russell Allen, Warren Bouck, Dan Brink, Lorna Brink, Betsy Brooks, Debbie Bucholtz, **Doris Burton**, Mary Lou Cartledge, Dale Coats, Ruth Coats, Carla Coch, **Diane Converse**, James Copenheaver, Elsie Cushing, Kate Cushing, Mark Cushing, Anne Eisenhardt, Peter Finlay, Terry Finlay, John Gradoni, Elaine Herdman, Geri Hills, Ralph Hills, Betty Kellog, Wayne Kellog, Lash Family, Peter MacDonald, Ken McClure, Marion McClure, Mary Ormsby, Lyle Palmiter, Thelma Palmiter, Sean Phelan, Ann Pipal, Bob Pipal, Michael Pitzrick, Vivian Pitzrick, Evelyn Ramsey, Dan Ramsey, Danielle Ramsey, Nicole Ramsey, Ona Reynolds, Ernest Rositzke, Nancy Rouse, Cathy Sorochin, Terah Soule, Wilma Taggart, Abby Timbrook, Tim Timbrook, Mary Lou Wells, **Suzanne Wood**

**Total number of observers:     239**



## Breeding Bird Atlas Training at Reinstein Preserve

*by Michael Morgante*

On the evening of Tuesday, May 28, 2002, I took a group of 10 birders through Reinstein Preserve on an "atlasing" field trip. The primary goal was to provide some tips for BOS members on how to atlas breeding birds for the Atlas 2000 project. During the walk around the preserve, we witnessed a Baltimore Oriole and Yellow Warblers carrying nest material, a Northern Flicker at a nest hole, a hen Mallard with young, and an American Crow sitting on a nest. Numerous other species were heard or seen and classified as "possible breeders". As it was late May, we still found some late migrants in Blackpoll Warbler and White-throated Sparrow (presumed migrant, but worth looking for possible breeding in June).

A secondary goal was to take advantage of this opportunity to see the beautiful woods at Reinstein Preserve, a state-owned, but private preserve located in Cheektowaga. Kristen Buechi, an environmental educator for NYSDEC, who oversees Reinstein activities, was present and coordinated our visit. She answered questions about the preserve, flora, and fauna. Of particular interest were some fenced areas full of vegetation that she explained are used to study the impact of deer browsing on the forest floor. The vegetation inside the fences was significantly bigger and more numerous; showing the devastating impact the bloated deer population is having on the vegetation (and impacting ground nesting birds as well).

At the conclusion of the walk, the Weikerts and Kristen joined me as I played some marsh bird tapes. I had a pair of Virginia Rails in 2000 while atlasing here and Kristen had a Least Bittern in early May 2001 at this location. However, we were unable to get any rails or bitterns with the tape. During the second walk back, Kristen pointed out a hole where she has seen Pileated Woodpeckers. As we stood around talking, we saw a Pileated depart the hole and then re-enter. As it got darker, I tried some owl calls. An Eastern Screech-Owl flew in just over us on the trail. It had a real menacing look, since it probably had fledged young close by. We sat back and watched for a minute, then went on our way. A nice end to an enjoyable evening walk. I look forward to the opportunity to repeat this trip in the future.

Many thanks to Kristen for asking me to plan a trip and coordinating the visit.

## May 5, 2002 Tifft Nature Preserve Field Trip Report

*by Edward Ratajczak*

Thirty some odd and even participants joined talents at 7:00 AM at Tifft Nature Preserve on a bright, warming Sunday morning to search for migrant and local avifauna. As we meandered and paused here and there, keen ears and sharp eyes located 65 species, including twelve (12) species of warblers, and excellent view of a prowling American Bittern found by Dennis Russell, and an accipiter upon its nest. The only field mark available to ID the bird consisted of about three (3) inches of the under side of the tail feathers. These appeared to be damaged, or even possibly missing the center tail feather. However, the large terminal band and minimal white edging upon what appeared to be a squared tail created a consensus for Sharp-shinned Hawk. Respectfully submitted.





**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 1020 Humboldt Parkway  
 Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## June-July-August Calendar

**June and July. NYS Breeding Bird Atlas.** For information contact Dick Rosche (E-mail, [drosche@juno.com](mailto:drosche@juno.com); telephone, 652-8409).

**July 28: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

**August 18: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker at (716) 745-9129 or E-mail [TerryYonker@cs.com](mailto:TerryYonker@cs.com).

**August 25: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Alec Humann (tentative). Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

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# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 68, No. 7 July, 2002

### THE MONTH: June

*by Joseph Thill*

The cold and wet weather that characterized the month of May as the fourth coldest for that period in the annals of weather recording at Buffalo, lingered into June with light rain and below average temperatures; the low thermometer reading this month at Buffalo, 44 °F on June 3rd, was nine degrees below normal for that date. A large ridge of high pressure from western Canada kept the region rain free and sunny with cool temperatures until June 12th when low pressure systems from the Gulf of Mexico and the Canadian Maritimes ushered in more seasonal weather with intervals of light rain. A second large low pressure system from the Gulf on the 14th brought a southwest flow of warm winds and increased humidity to Western New York portending the uncomfortably hot and humid summer to follow. There was no significant rainfall in the Greater Buffalo Region until June 26th when an unstable air mass accompanying a cold front from Canada precipitated a much needed downpour in the Southern Tier counties where a second summer of drought threatened the growing season. However, by month's end, a dome of high pressure that remained stationary over New England and the Atlantic Coast to the Gulf of Mexico afforded welcome, if temporary,

relief from the hot weather.

Climate data for Buffalo and adjacent suburbs in June tells the story: This month there were only eleven days of measurable precipitation at Buffalo; precipitation for the month in the city

totaled only 1.47 inches, 2.35 inches below normal; the greatest rainfall was 0.47 inches recorded on June 14th.--Meteorological data as provided by the local Climate Summary of the National Weather Service via the Internet and the Daily Weather Summary in the *Buffalo News*.

On June 8th, Donald Harris observed a very large adult swan swimming and feeding in Ring-neck Marsh at the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge in Orleans County. Upon closer inspection, the bird's long, straight and gradually sloping black bill and lack of yellow lores proved it to be an adult Trumpeter Swan. A yellow band around the bird's neck leads Harris to believe it is part of 'The Ultra-light Project' an ambitious plan sponsored by Environmental Studies at Aerie in Maryland and Defenders of Wildlife for the establishment of a viable Atlantic population of this species breeding in suitable wetlands in New York State and wintering in Chesapeake Bay. In the summer of 2001, 12 Trumpeter cygnets were released in the Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area in Genesee County where they successfully survived the following winter. Four of this group gained notoriety in the local and national media, having been trained to follow an ultra-light aircraft used to acclimate them to migrate in their journey to Western New York; the remaining cygnets had been transported to New York State by truck. There was a second sighting of a Trumpeter Swan in our study area in June; on the 14th, Kurt Fox saw "a quite tame" swan of this species at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant in the City of Batavia in Genesee County.

It is no longer a surprise when the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant plays host to unusual summering waterfowl. On June 29th Brendan Klick observed

75	<b>The Month</b> <i>by Joseph Thill</i>
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two adult male Canvasbacks swimming in a large open pond on those premises where they were easily identified by their diagnostic long smooth sloping bills, sloping forehead and dark red heads. To no one's surprise, earlier on that date, Donald Harris had seen one adult Canvasback at that site while a summering Lesser Scaup was observed there by Kurt Fox on June 15th and presumably the same bird was seen there again by Donald Harris on the 29th.

The impetus provided by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs' 'Atlas 2000' project, now in its third year, continued without interruption in June. Once again this month the impact of increased field activity on the part of local birders

participating in the breeding bird survey has yielded a surprising number of interesting records. In the course of his atlasing activities on June 12th, Bill Watson found a late adult Wilson's Phalarope in breeding plumage at the edge of a pond in a farm field on Fuller Road in the Niagara County Town of Newfane. This bird is a scarce passage migrant in spring and fall in our region. Of still greater interest are several reports of Sedge Wrens, a summer resident with the status of "a rare to uncommon local breeder and migrant in New York State" (*Bull's Birds of New York State*, 2nd ed., 1998). On June 16th, Willie D'Anna, in the course of his atlasing activity, stopped by a wet overgrown pasture on Daniels Road in the Town of Wilson in Niagara County where he heard a bird song - several notes followed by a rapid chattering trill - he recognized as that of a Sedge Wren. He did not see the bird

which remained concealed in the tall grass of the pasture. On June 22nd, Brendan Klick and Donald Harris visited the site where they had brief glimpses of the bird and heard its song. On June 8th Jamestown birder Jim Berry observed "a small brown bird with a cocked tail" while scanning the banks of Alder Bottom Stream from a bridge on Chautauqua County Route #4 in that county's Sherman Township. After locating the bird and hearing it singing from concealment in tall grass along the creek bank, Berry had an opportunity to view it at close range with binoculars; identifying it as a Sedge Wren by its buff-colored flanks and undertail coverts. Berry also made an audiotape of its song (three 'chups' followed by a chatter!) It is a life bird for him. On June 21st Fredonia birder Terry Mosher was walking on Sage Road in the Chautauqua Town of Pomfret when his attention was attracted to several call notes from a bird concealed in a sedgy section of a large hayfield. The call notes were familiar to Mosher who recognized them as the song of a Sedge Wren, a species he had previously encountered in the field. Within minutes, two more wrens in an uncut section of the field were in full song, during which time he had "his best look ever" at a Sedge Wren singing atop a weed stalk.

Other species of interest in June include warblers and other birds from Southern Tier counties hitherto considered absent or uncommon in our study area. They include two Pine Warblers seen by Gerry Rising in the course of his Atlas 2000 field work in conifer plantations in the towns of Bolivar and Friendship in Allegany County on June 8th and 10th. Pine Warblers were also seen by Donald Harris and Brendan Klick in the Bush Hill State Forest in the Town of Humphrey in Cattaraugus County. On June 1st, Harris returned to the conifer plantation on Keller Road in Yorkshire Township in Cattaraugus County, scene of the discovery of a thriving colony of Clay-colored Sparrows in June 2001 (see *Prothonotary* 67:7, July 2001). He was pleased to see three Clay-colored Sparrows still in occupancy including one, presumably a male bird, perched atop a small spruce tree "giving a three-buzz song". On June 6th, Brendan Klick and Dick Sowinski visited the scene and located two of these sparrows in a section of the plantation in Scotch Pine trees three to five feet in height. One bird was heard singing a song several times: a series of "soft buzzy insect-like zee notes".

The writer wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Bob Andrie, Willie D'Anna, Brendan Klick, Gerry Rising and Bill Watson in preparing this article.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	6	1	Farmersville	Klick, Sowinski
Pied-billed Grebe	6	1 ad + 2 yg.	Pembroke	Rising
D.-crested Cormorant	6	128 +26 nst.	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson, Kandel
"	14	240 +29 nst.	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
American Bittern	23	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Yoerg
Least Bittern	21	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
"	23	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Yoerg, Henderson
Great Egret	2	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Watson
"	3,27	2,1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris
"	9	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Morgante
"	17	9 ad + 20 yg.	Motor Is., Niag. R.	Watson, Kandel
Black-cr. Night-Heron	2	2	Newstead	Watson
"	5	1	Yates	Watson
"	7	1	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
Trumpeter Swan	8	1 (banded)	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris
"	15	1 (#R37)	Batavia WWTP	Fox
Northern Shoveler	2	1	Clarence	Watson
"	15	5	Batavia WWTP	Fox
Green-winged Teal	27	12	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris
Canvasback	<u>29</u>	2	Batavia WWTP	Klick
Lesser Scaup	3,17	12,11	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	15;29	1;1	Batavia WWTP	Fox; Harris
Ruddy Duck	15;29	219;114	Batavia WWTP	Fox; Klick
Osprey	19	1	Newfane	Watson
"	22	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
"	23	1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Yoerg, Henderson
Bald Eagle	15	1 imm.	Batavia WWTP	Fox
"	19	2 imm.	Newfane	Watson
"	23	2 imm.	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Goshawk	1	1 ad.	Yorkshire	Harris
Red-shouldered Hawk	8	1	Bennington	Morgante
"	13	1	Marilla	Morgante
Broad-winged Hawk	8	2	Bennington	Morgante
"	15	1	Elma	Morgante
Peregrine Falcon	<u>3,20</u>	5,4	Buffalo (Statler)	Burch et al
Sora	16	2	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
American Coot	2	21	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Watson
"	8	1	Sherman	Berry
"	9	1	Bird Is. Pier, Bflo.	Morgante
Black-bellied Plover	3L	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris
Semipalmated Plover	5L	2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
Upland Sandpiper	18	1	Eagle	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Semipalm. Sandpiper	2	64	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Watson
"	5L	15	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
White-r. Sandpiper	3;5	3;1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris; Watson
"	13L	2	Ridgeway	Watson
Dunlin	3L	11	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris
Common Snipe	9	1	Otto	D'Anna, Potter
Wilson's Phalarope	<u>12</u>	1	Newfane	Watson
Caspian Tern	9	1	Squaw Island, Bflo.	Morgante
"	11	4	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
Common Tern	2	11	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	13;22	3;2	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris; Klick
Black Tern	13	2	Sinking Ponds N.S.	Holmes
"	29	11	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Klick, Harris
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	14	2	Chestnut Ridge Park	Skalicky
Common Nighthawk	1-5	2	Blasdell	Turisk
"	2	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	22	1	North Buffalo	Klick
"	29	3	Clymer	Berry
Whip-poor-will	7	7	Port Colborne, Ont.	Burch(BOS)
Red-headed Wdpkr.	10	2	Wendt Beach S.P.	Skalicky
"	16	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	1	Newfane	Watson
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	1-30	1	Lancaster	Morgante
Acadian Flycatcher	8	1	Clymer	Berry
"	13	4	Boston	Skalicky
"	14	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Skalicky
"	15	1	Attica	Morgante
"	15	1	Bennington	Fox
"	23	1	Portland	Mosher
"	30	1	New Oregon	Harris
Yellow-thr. Vireo	8	1	Darien	Morgante
"	9	1	Otto	D'Anna, Potter
"	19	1	North Harmony	Moshers
Common Raven	9	1	Coyle Hill S.F.	Rising
"	16	3	Ward	Brooks
"	23	5	Birdsall	Brooks
Cliff Swallow	9;16	2;4	Peace Bridge	Morgante; Andrle
"	15	26 + 41 nests	Buckhorn Is. S.P.	Watson
Red-br. Nuthatch	29	1	Yates	Watson
Carolina Wren	27	2 + n5e	Eden Valley	Andrle
"	29	2	Como Park	Morgante
"	29	1	Marilla	Holmes
Winter Wren	22	1	Evans	Andrle
* <u>Sedge Wren</u>	8	1	Sherman	Berry
"	16,21	1	Wilson	D'Anna
"	17	1	Wilson	Harris
"	21,25	2,4	Pomfret	Mosher
"	22	1	Wilson	Klick
Marsh Wren	22	3	East Aurora	Holmes
"	23	1	Alder Bottom	Berry
Swainson's Thrush	8L	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Northern Mockingbird	27	3	Yates	Watson

<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Golden-wing. Warbler	12,23	1,1	Newfane	Watson
"	15;22	2;1	Barre	Harris; Klick
*" <u>Lawrence's Warbler</u> "	2,18	1,1	Pike	Schlacter, Watson
"	16	2	Barre	Yoerg
Nashville Warbler	3,14	1,1	Alfred	Brooks
"	6;29	1;1	Yorkshire	Klick; D'Anna
Pine Warbler	<u>1</u>	2	Wilson	D'Anna
"	<u>8,15</u>	1	Darien	Morgante
"	<u>9</u>	2	Bush Hill S.F.	Harris, Klick
Prairie Warbler	1	6	Yorkshire	Harris
"	3-30	3 max.	Andover	Brooks
"	8	6	Alfred	Brooks
"	9,29	4,6	Otto	D'Anna et al
Blackpoll Warbler	2L	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
Black-and-white Warb.	28	1	Carlton	Watson
Prothonotary Warbler	2	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Watson
"	23;29	2; 1	Tonawanda W.M.A.	Yoerg; Harris
Northern Waterthrush	2	1	Busti	Berry
"	16	3	Burgeson W.S.	Turisk, Krawczyk
Louisiana Waterthrush	13	2	Boston	Skalicky
"	14	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Skalicky
"	26	1	Eden	Andrle
Canada Warbler	5,13	1,1	Yates	Watson
Yellow-br. Chat	8,15;29	3	Iroquois N.W.R.	Harris; Klick
* <u>Clay-col. Sparrow</u>	1	3	Yorkshire	Harris
"	4-30	2 max.	Andover	Brooks
"	6	2	Yorkshire	Klick et al
Vesper Sparrow	5-29	1	Yates	Watson
"	8-19	2	Andover	Brooks
"	15	6	Barre	Harris
"	30	1	Wilson	D'Anna
Grasshopper Sparrow	2	1	Clarence	Watson
"	8	2	Alfred	Brooks
"	12,23	1,3	Newfane	Watson
"	13,18	2,2	Andover	Brooks
"	14	2	Carlton Hill M.U.A.	Fox
"	21,25	2,3	Pomfret	Mosher, Bentons
"	22	1	Iroquois N.W.R.	Klick, Harris
"	30	1	Porter	D'Anna
Henslow's Sparrow	2,18	3,4	Eagle	Schlacter, Watson
"	7	1	Port Colborne, Ont.	Klick
"	14	2	Carlton Hill M.U.A.	Fox
"	15	1	Barre	Harris
White-thr. Sparrow	2,9,16	2,2,2	Ward	Brooks
"	4-22	7 max.	Alfred	Brooks
"	8	1	Blasdell	Turisk
"	23	1	Birdsall	Brooks
Orchard Oriole	1-30	2	<u>Eden Valley</u> (f)	Andrle
"	30	1	Wilson	D'Anna
Pine Siskin	2	3	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	<u>13</u>	1	Marilla	Morgante
"	<u>22</u>	1	Colden (f)	Wojewodzki



Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:  
Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:  
Total for the year 2002:

263  
3  
266

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.

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### **Change of B.O.S. Compiler** *by Michael Morgante*

After 6.5 years on the job (that's 78 months), I am stepping aside as compiler of records for B.O.S. I still enjoy the task and learn a lot from the effort, but my time is too limited during the 4 months each year when I have article deadlines for *The Kingbird*.

Bruce Chilton will now be compiling the records. His address is 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. His Email address is BChi314159@aol.com. If sending by Email, please clearly indicate in the subject line that you are sending him records for B.O.S.

I will be working with Bruce in hope of a smooth transition. Please support him in the manner in which you greatly supported me. If anything mistakenly gets sent to me, I will redirect it to Bruce.

I hope to review your individual BOS monthly records for use in *The Kingbird*. I will work out an arrangement with Bruce and/or Bob Andrie such that I can see all of your reports and notes.



### **Another Fine Whip-poor-will Outing** **June 7, 2002** *by Bill Burch*

Perhaps it is a bit of the mystical that attracts 38 persons to a quiet gravel road at nightfall to await the chorus of the Whip-poor-wills. This is the 11th year of this outing and it still is a favorite one.

The outing began with a 7:00 p.m. dinner at the Lotus Gardens in Port Colborne, Ontario. Present were 22 Canadians from the Bert Miller Nature Club and 16 BOS members. Afterwards, we made a short stop at the fields of Minor Road, where Bobolink, Meadowlark and Savannah Sparrow were found. We reached Wilson Road, three miles west of town, at 8:45 p.m., and went a mile north (designated by a side road here) to the favored spot. While watching the last of the color disappear from the sky, we listened to thrushes and a catbird, noting that the loud "thunk" of the Green Frog was missing, just as it was last year.

Brendan Klick surveyed south along the road for 100 yards, and at 9:05, used the FRS radio in his hand to report a calling Whip-poor-will in the road. Most of us hiked down there to see the bird on the warm gravel; its eye shining from the last of the daylight. As full darkness fell, Ed Ratajczak moved his car closer, and with the aid of his lights and his scope, we all took turns viewing the brilliant eye of the bird at about 150 yards. (At times there were two birds in the road). From 9:15 to 9:45 p.m. there were a number, seven or more Whip-poor-wills calling from the great Wainfleet Bog east of the road. Some were still calling at 10:15 as the last of the satisfied watchers departed.



# Leaping Lizards! It's Fishing Grackles!

by Bill Watson

Working on the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas can produce many interesting observations of bird behavior. While looking for confirmations of breeding on July 23, 2002 in Block 2280A, which is located in the northwest corner of Orleans County in the Town of Yates, I stopped to eat lunch at Shadigee along the shore of Lake Ontario. It was bothering me that I had not confirmed breeding behavior in a common species such as Common Grackle. So I was more than interested in the Common Grackles flying over Lake Ontario.

The Common Grackles would fly from land out over Lake Ontario until they got about twenty yards from shore. There they would stop and hover into a 15 mph northwest wind. As they hovered they would slowly drift westward parallel to the south shoreline of Lake Ontario, and even more slowly drift toward deeper water.

Although the hovering was different, it's not unusual to observe Common Grackles flying slowly over the lake with swallows. I have always assumed that these grackles, like the swallows, were foraging over the surface of the water looking for downed insects.

I was surprised to see a hovering grackle dive down to the water's surface immersing bill, throat, lower head and neck, and breast into the water. The Common Grackle did this four times in about twenty seconds. Clearly he was not picking an insect off the surface of the water. His penetration below the water's surface was far too great for that. Perhaps he was taking a bath on the wing.

Fortunately, the grackle then flew in a half circle back to shore and landed on the grass only ten yards in front of me! With my binoculars I could plainly see a fish about one inch long in its bill. Leaping lizards, its a fishing grackle!

I could not savor the moment; for after about five seconds the grackle was approached by a fledging grackle, and the fish disappeared. With much satisfaction I marked FY (for Food for Young) on my Breeding Bird Atlas Field Card. At last, I had confirmed Common Grackle as a breeder in Block 2280A.

For the next twenty minutes I watched as many as four Common Grackles hovering over the water, doing less than perfect imitations of Belted Kingfishers. Kurt Fox saw the same grackle flight behavior the next day.

I shouldn't have been surprised to see a grackle catch a fish, for I have long been aware that Common Grackles are attracted to water and their taste for fish is well documented. When I was in grade school, I noticed that grackles would make a special flight to defecate in a residential swimming pool. It was a habit of which I could not break them. This unpleasant behavior does not appear to be documented in the literature.

It has been suggested that fish are a preferred food of the Common Grackle during the nesting season. This is one reason Common Grackles nest in Osprey nests. Bent suggests commensalism stating: "Apparently the grackles are not molested by the giant birds, and from the association have derived protection as well as scraps from the Osprey's dinner table" (Bent 1965).

Bent relates three reports that show that grackles are proficient in catching fish and fish can be an important part of the grackles' diet: Mr. Frank C. Pellet observed grackles "feeding on minnows at a Mississippi River power dam near Hamilton, Ill. The birds alighted in the shallow water running over the cement apron below the dam and watched the passing minnows. When a fish was caught they flew to a nearby rock, or to the top of the dam, and hammered the victim to death. Mr. Pellet, who observed the performance for many days, is of the opinion that grackles living near water may depend on fish to a considerable extent."

L. L. Snyder (1928) observed a Common Grackle "perched on a stone in the center of his bird bath, spear a minnow which was then laid on the grass at the border of the bath. The performance was repeated until the grackle had secured three minnows, these were then picked up and carried away. Upon examining the bath at a later date, he found that every one of two dozen minnows had disappeared. After several days had elapsed, the bath was restocked with fish but these likewise disappeared."

Clarence Cottam's (1943) observation was the only aerial report of fishing grackles and was very similar to the feeding technique I enjoyed watching. He made his observations at the outlet of a reservoir where "Apparently the turbines were cutting up or otherwise killing large numbers of gizzard shad and other small fishes. These, brought to the surface by the churning water attracted Ring-billed, Herring, Laughing, and Bonaparte's Gulls as well as crows, Purple Grackles, and even a solitary Red-wing.... The grackles and crows fed over the water, picking up morsels of food with the skill and dexterity of the typical water birds.



The feet and even the breast feathers of many of the crows and grackles were seen touching the surface of the water momentarily as the birds hovered over this (for them) uncharacteristic feeding place" (Bent 1965).

Since Common Grackles are so abundant, one has to wonder if they will become the next scapegoat of inept and ignorant fishermen, and even possibly replace the Double-crested Cormorant in its much maligned status.

Bent, Arthur C. 1965. *Life Histories of North American Blackbirds, Orioles, Tanagers, and Allies*. Dover Publications Inc. New York. pp. 374-421.

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## Errata: The Prothonotary Volume 68, No. 5 May, 2002 by Michael Hamilton (08/05/02)

On page 57 note changes to the first two paragraphs indicated by bold-faced type in the following:

**\*\*COMPARATIVE INFORMATION:** Associated charts, available from Michael Hamilton, compare this year's records with those for 1993-2002 and those for 1935-2002. A chart listing totals for each species per section for 2002 is also available. **In addition the following notes are added which highlight an unusual number of highest counts (22) since 1935 and two new species for the April count:**

**\*\*INDIVIDUAL SPECIES SINCE 1935:**

**Highest count:** (Numbers in parenthesis indicate the average) **Double-crested Cormorant, 740 (62)**; Great Egret, 11(1); Lesser Scaup, 8,439 (783); Bufflehead, 6712 (**864**); Ruddy Duck, 996 (64); Virginia Rail, 4 (0 -seen on only 11 previous counts); Mourning Dove, 2412 (**708**); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 132 (15); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 90 (19); Pileated Woodpecker, 35 (10); Blue-headed Vireo, 3 (0 -seen on only 1 previous count); Northern Rough-winged Swallow, 283 (8); Tufted Titmouse, 191 (27); Carolina Wren, 44 (4); Northern Mockingbird, 46 (5); Brown Thrasher, 23 (2); Pine Warbler, 9 (0 -seen on only 5 previous counts); Palm Warbler, 2 (0 -seen on only 4 previous counts); Louisiana Waterthrush, 3 (0 -seen on only 4 previous counts); Chipping Sparrow, 360 (38); Swamp Sparrow, 221 (34); Northern Cardinal, 1143 (**351**).

**First count sightings: (note that the Double-crested Cormorant entry has been relocated under the highest count heading).**

**Also on page 57 under OBSERVERS:**

Maggie Smith's name in Section 2 and John Welte's name in Section 10 should be in bold-faced type as they were the compilers for these two sections.

## Radios Lead Researchers to Nests of Elusive Marbled Murrelets from the U.S. Geological Survey

It's 2 in the morning, about a mile off the coast of Redwood National and State Parks in Humboldt County, California, near the northernmost part of the state. In the pitch-black night, researchers talk quietly while they wait aboard the RV Coral Sea, a 90-foot Humboldt State University research vessel.

Waiting patiently is an essential trait for those who study birds, especially "shy" seldom-seen birds. This time, researchers from the U.S. Geological Survey and Humboldt State University have waited for an hour before their small talk and dozing between captures are broken by the sound of the two-way radio. "Coral Sea, this is Orthmeyer in Mobile 1. We have a bird. We're en route." What Dennis Orthmeyer, USGS research biologist, and the capture team have is a Marbled Murrelet, a seabird about 8 inches long and weighing less than a half-pound. Marbled Murrelets feed on small fish and invertebrates in the ocean, using their wings to "fly" through the water. They are unusual among seabirds because they are often solitary or found in groups of two or three instead of the large social groups of many seabirds. Except when these birds nest and raise young, they spend their entire life on the ocean. Even stranger, though, is the fact that these chubby little birds with whirring wings and a fast flight, fly inland to nest on high branches of old-growth redwood and Douglas fir trees.

In 1992 the Marbled Murrelet was listed as a federally threatened species in California, Oregon, and Washington, primarily because of the loss of nesting habitat in old-growth forests. In California, the bird is state-listed as endangered. Until this study began last year, only a few Marbled Murrelet nests had ever been found in California. In fact, no Marbled Murrelet nest had ever been discovered until the 1970s. Last year, scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey and the Humboldt State University found five nests, aided by radios on the birds. This year, the researchers have radio-marked an additional 44 birds and are now searching for nests. This particular Murrelet is captured by scientists with many years of experience who used a spotlight and dip net to capture the bird as it rode the waves on the ocean where it was spending the night before returning closer to shore to feed at sunrise. Each member of a breeding pair will return to its nest, switching places with its partner before or at sunrise for a 24-hour stint attending the nest. The bird's travel at sunrise or sunset, when coastal fog is most prevalent, caused early loggers in the area to call it the "fog bird."



The capture team carefully transports the bird in a 14-foot inflatable boat to the research vessel, where a bird processing line is ready to go.

To keep the captured bird calm, the researchers handle the bird carefully and quickly with gloved and gentle hands, low lights and talking quietly only when essential. As soon as the bird arrives at the RV Coral Sea, the murrelet is placed in the hands of HSU seabird biologist Percy Hebert, who examines the bird to determine if it has a broodpatch, a featherless area on its chest that indicates the bird is nesting. The bird is then passed to Tom Jenson from the Center for Reproduction of Endangered Species in San Diego, for an ultrasound, a technique being developed to discern if a bird is a male or female since the Marbled Murrelet males and females look alike.

After this, a measuring team quickly weighs the bird and takes its body measurements, and then draws a small bit of blood for information about sex, genetics, and blood characteristics to identify stress. This blood will be used for baseline information about the species, and in oil spills and other situations where the blood characteristics can be compared. Finally, veterinarian Rick Brown of HSU attaches a minute radio transmitter, less than one-half the size and weight of a nickel, to the bird. Then, a short while later, researchers transport the bird by a Zodiac boat to near its capture site where the bird is released onto the ocean.

Five days later, a California Department of Fish and Game aircraft reports to researchers on the ground that they have located the bird inland from the coast. The radio provides essential information on the movements, timing of nesting, and habitat of this secretive bird. By tracking radio signals of these murrelets, biologists have been able to find murrelet nests, which are usually 200-feet high in old-growth trees. And knowing the secretive locations of these nests and more about the bird's life history is vital to effectively protecting this unique bird, say Dennis Orthmeyer and Richard Golightly, the two scientists leading this three-year study of the effects of human-caused disturbance on breeding Marbled Murrelets. Orthmeyer, a scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey's Western Ecological Research Center, and Golightly, a professor and scientist in the wildlife department at Humboldt State University in Arcata, are pleased because the radios have already led them to five murrelet nests that probably would have never been found through more traditional methods.

After capturing and releasing 23 Marbled Murrelets last year and 44 this year, the research team is inten-

sively studying the movements and nesting status of the murrelets. Daily ground and airplane crews track the movements of the radioed murrelets on the ocean and inland during the breeding season from April to August. "The scanner is very similar to the radio in your car," says Orthmeyer, "and the murrelets are all on different stations. So if a murrelet signal indicates an inland location during the day, it is at a nest, and ground crews hurry to pinpoint the nest for further study." Said Golightly: "One of our goals is to provide land managers of Redwood National and State Parks, as well as nearby landowners, with factual information that will enable them to make sound management decisions to help conserve this federally threatened species. We hope to identify factors that may contribute to successful reproduction and future generations of Marbled Murrelets."

Since the Marbled Murrelet is now restricted to small areas of its former range because of the loss of old-growth forests, said Golightly, it is vital that land managers have good science-based information to maintain the successful nesting of the remaining birds.

This team of HSU and USGS researchers, along with staff from the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game, are studying nest locations, different kinds of habitats necessary for the birds, and general life-history requirements to understand how nesting murrelets respond to human disturbances or other human use of their nesting habitat.

Preliminary results from the first year of the study include:

- (1) All nests the researchers found were in old-growth trees.
- (2) Of the five murrelet nests examined, three were probably successful in producing and raising young.
- (3) At sea, the radio-marked murrelets ranged over the breeding season from the mouth of Humboldt Bay to Brookings, Oregon, a distance of about 90 miles.

This project is supported by the U.S. Geological Survey, Humboldt State University, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the California Department of Transportation.



*erratum:* Alder Flycatcher should be [\*Alder Flycatcher F] in the 2002 May Count, *The Prothonotary* Vol. 68, No. 6.



**Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

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## August – October Calendar

**August 25: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Bob Wagner 633-8109. Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there.

**September 8: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach** for warblers and shorebirds. Leader: Mike Zebehazy 662-6987. Meet at 7:30 AM in the Tifft N. P. parking lot.

**September 11: BOS Meeting.** Members night. Bring along favorite slides/stories to share. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**September 20-22: 55th Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs** in Oswego, New York. Details are in the July issue of the New York Birder or check the website at <http://birds.cornell.edu/fnysbc/Articles/FedAnnualMtg.htm>

**September 25: BOS Meeting.** 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**October 13: BOS Annual October Count.** If you have questions or would like to volunteer contact Mike Hamilton 881-6709.

**October 19: Saturday not Sunday. Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant and Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge Trip** for waterfowl and other migrants. Leader: Mike Morgante. 683-4819. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Batavia WWTP at the end of Industrial Boulevard, which is off of Pearl Road (Route 33) in Batavia 1 1/2 miles east of Route 98.

**October 26: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip** for fall migrants. Leader: Willie D'Anna 731-4348. Meet at 8 a.m. at Tops Market in Wright's Corners - on the east side of Rt. 78 at Route 104.

*Note: All field trip are a full day in length and participants should pack a lunch. If you are interested in leading a field trip, call Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: July

by Mike Zebehazy

July 2002 featured near constant sunshine, heat, and humidity across all of Western New York. Most of the month was quite dry with virtually no rain falling in the Buffalo area during the first three weeks. Several thunderstorms during the final week brought some much needed rain and boosted the monthly rainfall totals back into the normal range across the region.

Overall it was the sunniest month in Buffalo in 31 years. It was also the 8<sup>th</sup> warmest July in 60 years of records at the Buffalo-Niagara Airport.

The average temperature of 73.3 °F was almost three degrees above normal. There were no record temperatures as the prevailing southwest wind off Lake Erie tempered the extreme heat. Still, the mercury reached the 80s on 23 days topping 86 °F on eight of them. One day the temperature reached 91. Dew points were in the 70s on 15 days making the heat more oppressive.

Rainfall totaled 3.2 inches at the airport, almost exactly normal. However, this is a bit deceiving as nearly all of the rain fell during three thunderstorms in the final week. This rain was most welcome as parched lawns and fields began to green up at month's end.

Sunshine was almost constant during July, especially during the first three weeks. Buffalo

eight of which had full 100 percent sun. Only three were mostly cloudy.

There was little weather of note during the first three weeks. A very warm muggy 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday period gave way to a brief cooldown during the second week before heat and humidity returned. All weekends were fine continuing the trend of the summer. Thunderstorms swept across the Buffalo metro area overnight on 22-23<sup>rd</sup>, early on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and late on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The first two storms brought some locally heavy rainfall while the storm during the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup> was severe over parts of the city with many trees downed in Delaware Park and North Buffalo. These storms occurred during overnight or early morning periods, as is usually the case in a Buffalo summer and did not interfere with outdoor activities or festivals.

Lake Erie warmed to 77 °F during the month, four degrees above normal, but the warmest only since 1999. The record warmth for the lake was 80 °F in August 1988. (Meteorological data provided by the National Weather Service *Monthly Weather Summary* for Buffalo, NY as posted on the Internet.)

The Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant continues to be an excellent location for waterfowl and shorebird migrants while in Ontario the shoreline of Lake Erie, with its still below average depth, has been great as well.

As you can see from the Noteworthy Records there were 54 species recorded this month of which five species required written verification due to the date and one due to the location.

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received 77 percent of the possible amount for the month — the most for any month since 78 percent in August 1970. Twenty-two days were mostly sunny,



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Regional highlights: Bill Watson spotted 2 Canvasback and 288 Ruddy Ducks in the same Batavia WWTP pond. Brendan Klick commented on the (Rock Point) Long-tailed Ducks' distinctive flight style with fast wingbeats completely below the horizontal. The Bufflehead observed at Point Abino, Ontario was either an immature or a female. Klick and Harris also spotted a Merlin at Rock Point carrying something in its talons. According to the report on Dial-a-Bird this is likely the first summer record of this species in the BOS study area. Klick and Harris's Peregrines were flying over the Skyway chasing each other. Klick suggested that perhaps they were two immature birds learning to fly.

Of special interest

this month is a report of the first confirmed breeding of Caspian Tern in the BOS study area. A notice was posted via the internet on the Ontbirds listserv by D. V. Chip Weseloh, wildlife biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service—Ontario Region. On July 3 he visited Mohawk Island and recorded approximately 165 Caspian Tern nests, 204 Common Tern nests, and 303 Double-crested Cormorant nests. He also noted numbers of nesting Herring Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls. Young were present for all species. Common Tern nests contained mostly eggs. *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region* (Beardslee and Mitchell, 1965, 37-38) describes the location as follows, "Gull Island, sometimes called Mohawk Island, lies off this shore [between Mohawk and Rockhouse Points]. About four acres in area, it is a breeding place for Herring and Ring-billed Gulls and Common Terns. Prior to the sec-

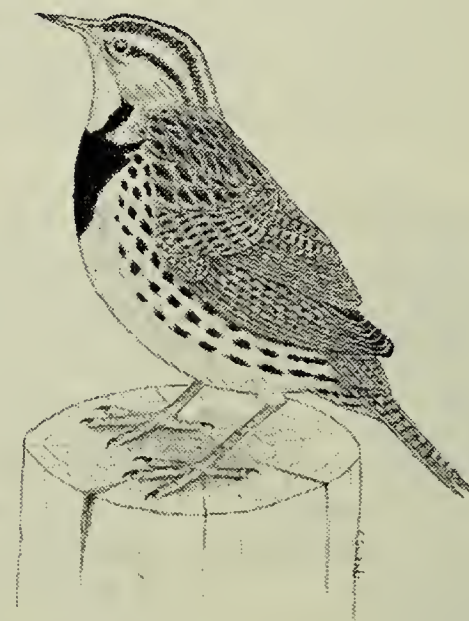
ond World War terns were the only abundant nesters, but recently Ring-billed Gulls have far outnumbered the terns and the few Herring Gulls." In the same book the species account for Caspian Tern concludes, "We should, however, continue to check nearby Mohawk Island to see whether the species might start to nest there in the future." (p.263)

Terry Mosher submitted a written verification report of Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the town of Arkwright at an elevation of about 1000 to 1150 feet. According to Bull's *Birds of New York State* (Levine, Ed. 1998), Yellow-billed Cuckoo is usually found at elevations below 1000 feet.

Morgante notes that the high Henslow's Sparrow count (15) on William Street in Lancaster was a conservative one. This is the highest number of individuals reported in the BOS study area since 1967. Brooks' two male Clay-colored Sparrows were singing at a traditional breeding location, the pine plantation on Pingrey Road in the Town of Andover. The plantation is private property, but as in past years, the sparrows could be heard and seen from the road. Vesper Sparrow and Grasshopper Sparrow were also found along this road.

Finally, the Orchard Orioles at Andrlé's which have been there since May 26 continued to feed along with Baltimore Orioles and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Once or twice the Orchard Orioles would drive off the Baltimore Orioles and on one occasion the two males sat at opposite ports of the circular feeder, the clear sugar water distorting each one's view of the other but not completely blocking it.

Thanks for help in preparing this report go to Bob Andrlé, Gerry Rising, Bill Watson and the weekly reports from Dial-a-Bird hosted by David Suggs.





## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	8	1	Allegany SP	Hess
D.-crested Cormorant	7	208	Mohawk I., Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	8	35 ad + 11 yg	Motor I.	Watson
"	14, 31	91, 419	Buckhorn I.	Watson
Great Egret	1	1, 2	Tonawanda	Hess
"	2	4	Amherst	Klick
"	3, 9, 16	37, 28, 32	Motor I.	Watson
"	7	3	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	25	10	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	30	8	Tifft NP	Andrle
Mute Swan	14	2 ad.	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna
"	21	2	Dunnville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Gadwall	7	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
American Wigeon	7	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Amer. Black Duck	21	1	Rock Point PP	Klick, Harris
Canvasback	<u>7</u>	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Long-tailed Duck	<u>7</u>	10	Rock Point PP	Klick
Bufflehead	<u>21</u>	1	Point Abino. Ont.	Klick
Red-br. Merganser	21	3	Rock Point PP	Klick, Harris
Common Merganser	6	1 ad + 4 yg	Allegany SP	Hess
"	21	19	Ft. Erie	Klick, Harris
Ruddy Duck	7	291	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	21	1	Smithville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Osprey	6, 12	1 ad + nest	Allegany Reservoir	Hess
"	6, 12	2ad/2yg/nest	Allegany SP	Hess
"	7	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	25	1	Yates	Watson
Bald Eagle	7	1 imm.	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	11	1 imm.	Yates	Watson
Red-shouldered Hawk	5	3	Bennington	Morgante
Merlin	<u>7</u>	1	Rock Point PP	Klick, Harris
Peregrine Falcon	<u>21</u>	2	Buffalo	Klick, Harris
Semipalmated Plover	21F	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Lesser Yellowlegs	7F	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	7F	2	Times Beach	Klick, Harris
"	25	2	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Solitary Sandpiper	7F	2	Smithville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	10, 20	1, 1	Rushford, Leon	Andrle
"	13	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	23	1	Carlton	Watson
"	25	1	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Upland Sandpiper	30	2	Buff.-Niag. Intl. Airport	Morgante
Ruddy Turnstone	21F	2	Rock Point PP	Klick, Harris
Sanderling	18F	1	Newfane	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Semipalm. Sandpiper	21F	41 max.	4 locations, Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	25	4	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	27	300	Rock Point PP	D'Anna, Potter
"	29	15	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Least Sandpiper	7F	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	7	3, 25	Rock Pt., Smithville	Klick, Harris
"	25	36	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Pectoral Sandpiper	21F	2	Dunnville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	29	2	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
*Stilt Sandpiper	21F	3	Haldimand, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Short-b. Dowitcher	7F, 21	13 max.	3 locations, Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	27	40	Rock Point PP	D'Anna, Potter
Bonaparte's Gull	21	71	Haldimand & Dunnville	Klick, Harris
Caspian Tern	18	1	Newfane	Watson
"	21	1	Sturgeon Pt.	Andrle
"	21	134	Haldimand to Ft. Erie	Klick, Harris
"	29	2	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Black Tern	7	1	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Common Nighthawk	26, 30	1, 3	Buffalo	Klick
Whip-poor-will	7	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Red-headed Wdpkr.	23	2	Wendt Beach	Skalicky
"	24	1	Lancaster	Morgante
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	3	1	Lancaster	Morgante
Acadian Flycatcher	1	1	Clymer	Berry
"	4	5	Persia, Otto	D'Anna, Potter
Common Raven	1, 7	2	West Almond	Brooks
"	20	1	Ellicottville	Morgante
"	21	1	Ashford	Morgante
Bank Swallow	21	240	Haldimand, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Cliff Swallow	24	1 + 28 nests	Tonawanda Island	Watson
"	30	3	Tifft NP	Andrle
Red-br. Nuthatch	18	1 ad + 1 yg	Newfane	Watson
Carolina Wren	16	nest + 5 yg	Eden Valley	Andrle
"	21	6	Haldimand to Ft. Erie	Klick, Harris
Swainson's Thrush	12	1	Allegany SP	Hess
N. Mockingbird	4, 18	3, 2	Newfane	Watson
Prairie Warbler	1	2	Gerry	Rew
La. Waterthrush	4	7	Persia, Otto	D'Anna, Potter
"	7, 12	1, 1	Allegany SP	Hess
Eastern Towhee	7	15	Grand Island	Klick, Harris
Clay-col. Sparrow	2 - 21	2	Andover	Brooks
Vesper Sparrow	2 - 26	3 max	Andover	Brooks
"	13	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter
"	23	1	Yates	Watson
Grasshopper Sparrow	1 - 31	3 max	Andover	Brooks
Henslow's Sparrow	25	15	Lancaster	Morgante, Kandel
White-thr.Sparrow	1 - 31	3 max	Andover	Brooks
Red-w. Blackbird	23	3 late nstlng	Yates	Watson
Orchard Oriole	1 -24	2	Eden Valley	Andrle

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded: 266**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue: 1**

**Total for the year 2002: 267**

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.  
The Prothonotary 88



## A New York Record 'Late Date' for Red-winged Blackbird nestlings

by Bill Watson

On July 23, 2002, at 11:30 AM while working on the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas in Block 2280A in Yates Township, Orleans County, I watched a female Red-winged Blackbird carrying food. The bird landed in tall grass *with* the food and left *without* it. I walked to the location and found the nest on the crotch of a Dock plant, at a point where the three cylindrical fronds fork. In the nest were three very young nestlings. The nest was found at the northwest corner of Lower Lake and Fisher Roads.

Breardslee and Mitchell's, *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*, lists Red-winged Blackbird dates for nests with young between May 21 and July 8. The New York State Breeding Bird Atlas Handbook for Workers (February 2000) lists Red-winged Blackbird unfledged juveniles from May 29 to July 19. (Since the May 21 early date in *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region* is fairly well documented and was in New York, the May 29 date in New York State Breeding Bird Atlas Handbook for Workers is probably in error.) Realizing the importance of this nesting I returned to the same location on July 25 at 1:45 PM and passed close enough to the nest to again see the three nestlings with binoculars; however, when I again returned on July 29 the nest was empty. I believe these birds were probably *too* young to have fledged and were probably the victim of a predator.

The late date for Red-winged Blackbird nestlings (unfledged juveniles) should be changed from July 8 to July 25 (Niagara Frontier) and from July 19 to July 25 (New York State).

In Region 2, on *Genesee Birds*, on August 21, 2000, Jim Kimball reported "With the time I have spent in marshes looking for immature rails I have seen three or four cases of adult Red-winged Blackbirds carrying food for what I am sure are young still in the nest or recently fledged. The last of these was August 16 at the Cuylerville pond and marsh. Given that Red-winged Blackbirds are known to nest up to three times in a season, this doesn't seem to me to be unusual, though I notice the Breeding Bird Atlas Handbook gives July dates for the last fledged and unfledged juveniles. Has anyone else noticed continued Red-wing nesting or feeding in August?"

This is quite good evidence that Red-winged Blackbirds have nestlings and fledglings in Western New York during the month of August. Hopefully August nestling records will soon be documented for this species.

## BOS Field Trip Report: July 28, 2002 Rock Point Provincial Park

by Michael Hamilton

An estimated 400 very vocal shorebirds were enjoyed by seven of us at Rock Point Provincial Park today, the most any of us remembered seeing there at one time. Present were many Lesser Yellowlegs, Sanderlings (in various stages of beguiling plumage change), Semipalmated, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers and Short-billed Dowitchers along with quite a few Ruddy Turnstones, several Semipalmated Plovers and Spotted Sandpipers and, finally, two Stilt Sandpipers and a Killdeer. At the turf farms we had a Greater Yellowlegs and more Killdeer but no other plovers. The morning birding was interrupted for an hour by a thunderstorm with much rain and wind after which it cleared and became a typical hot, humid summer day.

On the way from the Point to the turf farms we spotted single Great Blue and Green Herons (Dennis Russell), Broad-winged Hawk (north edge of the Park), Wild Turkey (Tom O'Donnell) and Belted Kingfisher. We were surprised to see the Broad-winged Hawk here at this time of year but subsequently learned from John Black and Kayo Roy that a possible nesting pair had been reported in this Canadian atlas block. The Wild Turkey was a nice find also.

## Lovable Mischief

by Gertrude M. Weber,

from Audubon Outlook, Oct. 1953, vol. II, No. 4

Roguish pilferer and faker,  
Cunning little mischief maker,  
Crested dandy, teasing, mocking,  
Antics that are truly shocking.  
Garden peace and quiet broken?  
By such signs you have the token,  
Blue Jays on the ground

Yet I love his prancing paces,  
Saucy ways and sprightly graces,  
Artful clowning, blust'ry bragging,  
Where there's action, never lagging,  
All his wicked ways I pardon,  
Something's missing from the garden,  
When he's not around.





**Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## October – November Calendar

**October 9: BOS meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science.

**October 13: BOS Annual October Count.** If you have questions or would like to volunteer contact Mike Hamilton 881-6709.

**October 19: Saturday not Sunday. Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant and Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge Trip** for waterfowl and other migrants. Leader: Bill Watson. 695-2820. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Batavia WWTP at the end of Industrial Boulevard, which is off of Pearl Road (Route 33) in Batavia 1 1/2 miles east of Route 98.

**October 23: BOS meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science.

**October 26: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip** for fall migrants. Leader: Willie D'Anna 731-4348. Meet at 8 a.m. at Tops Market in Wright's Corners - on the east side of Rt. 78 at Route 104.

**November 13: BOS meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science.

**November 17: Niagara River joint trip** with Rochester GOS, for gulls and waterfowl. Meet at 9:00 AM at Fort Niagara State Park in the parking lot just outside the old fort. Leaders: BOS Brendan Klick (tentative)\_ 839-1792 and GOS Bob Spahn.

**November 27: BOS meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science.

*Note: All field trip are a full day in length and participants should pack a lunch. If you are interested in leading a field trip, call Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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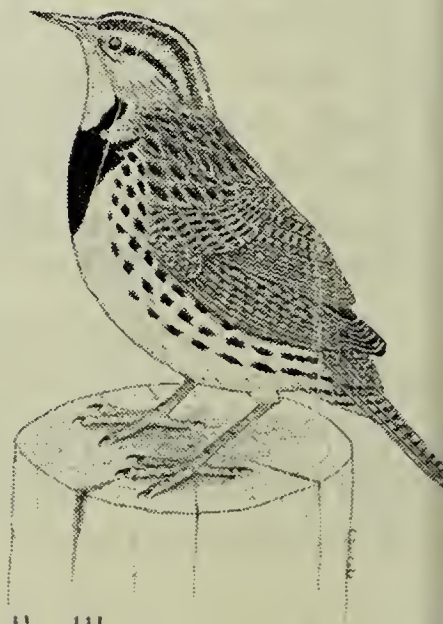
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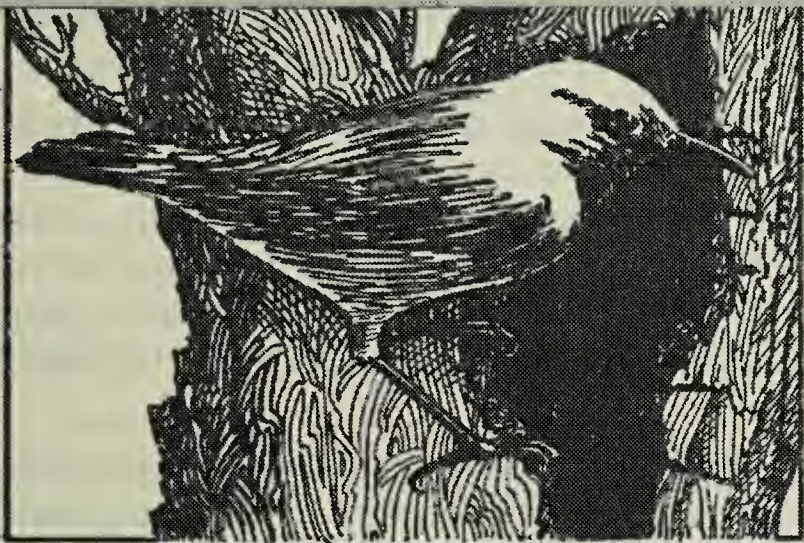
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# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 68, No. 9 September, 2002

### THE MONTH: August

by Michael Turisk

August 2002 proved a continuation of the hot, humid, and extremely dry pattern that has been the rule in the northeast during the last several summers. As expected, local gardeners and farmers, desperate for a reprieve from the parched conditions, had little reason to rejoice this month. Oftentimes the nature of summertime precipitation is spotty and this was certainly the case last August, as some areas, namely portions of the Southern Tier, received more precipitation than the desiccated Lake Ontario counties to the north. Nevertheless, the entire study area continued to suffer under moderate to extreme drought conditions during the period. Essentially no rain fell until the 13<sup>th</sup>, ushering in a relatively brief span of precipitation days during mid-month. However, the final week of August marked the return of hot, dry weather. Precipitation was 2.10 inches below normal, with a scant 1.77 inches of rainfall occurring. Sunshine for the month was 73.8% with 7 days of 100% sun, while the average temperature for the period was 71.5 degrees, 2.4 degrees above normal (*fide* the National Weather Service Monthly Weather Summary via the Internet). Although it was indisputably hot, it was made worse by the extreme sultriness. Local meteorologists pointed to consistently high dew points – on many days well into the 70s – as being rather unusual, even

by August's generally steamy standards.

August was certainly an interesting month in terms of the number of verified species reported. On the morning of August 10<sup>th</sup>, Willie D'Anna

and Betsy Potter discovered an immature Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at the Cement Plant Road pond in Wainfleet Township, Ontario. The discovery was most timely, as D'Anna was to lead the Lake Erie shore trip for the Ontario Field Ornithologists later that morning. Fortunately the bird was rediscovered that afternoon and was enjoyed by about 25 OFO members. D'Anna noted that he has "made a habit to study juvenile night-herons" and that he "became suspicious about this bird because the bill seemed all dark..." The last occurrence of this species in our study area occurred on April 23, 1996 at Beaver Island State Park.

While birding at Woodlawn Beach State Park on the afternoon of Saturday, August 17, Brendan Klick and Don Harris were drawn to a very small tern that flushed and alighted on the beach a short distance away. They had the opportunity to compare it to a nearby Common Tern and Klick noted that the bird was "40% shorter than the Common and much more petite overall." They immediately identified it as a Least Tern, a species not observed in our study area since 1995. The bird's dusky-tipped yellow bill and rather distinctive head pattern confirmed their identification and these marks are clearly evident in digital photographs secured by several of our members. Many who studied the adult tern commented on its apparent listless behavior and suspected the bird had fallen ill. Unfortunately those fears were confirmed when it was discovered dead early the following week, perhaps succumbing to the effects of botulism. Even more disheartening, however, is the fact that the specimen failed to be contained and recovered. Apparently there were a number of reports of this species on the Great Lakes in August, this in spite of the lack of

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any major weather systems that often spur such relative widespread occurrence.

The Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant continues as a magnet for unusual summer waterfowl and is arguably the most reliable locale for Eared Grebe in our study area. On August 17, Brendan Klick observed a breeding-plumaged Eared Grebe at this location. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, 2 individuals were noted by Klick and Bill Watson and on the 25<sup>th</sup>, Mike Morgante observed 4 Eared Grebes at the plant. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, Bill Watson observed a large white swan on one of the dikes and closer scrutiny revealed a dirty yellowish neckband, an aluminum leg band, and an antenna protruding from the bird's central back. Watson was able to discern

Red-necked Phalarope and Mike Morgante had an excellent count of 8 Baird's Sandpipers on the 25<sup>th</sup>. This number is eclipsed, however, by the count of 22 Baird's Sandpipers observed by Willie D'Anna on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1991 at Rock Point Provincial Park.

Additional highlights in August include 2 early Merlin at Iroquois NWR on the 25<sup>th</sup> and again on the 31<sup>st</sup>, Willet at Rock Point P.P. and Morgan's Point, Ontario on the 15<sup>th</sup>, an early Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Iroquois NWR on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and an adult breeding-plumaged Lesser Black-backed Gull at Dunnville, Ontario on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

The latter half of August typically shows an increase in the array of southward-bound songbird migrants. Records for such species as Nashville, Magnolia, and Black-throated Blue Warblers were noted in late August at several of the "typical" migrant traps within our region, such as Rock Point P.P. and Goat Island.

Thanks go to Bill Watson and David Suggs for help in the preparation of this article.

## Wizard (to Dr. Axtell)

by Rose Noller

From *Audubon Outlook* January, 1961, Vol. 10, No. 1.  
(Trip to Beaver Meadow Refuge, to hear owls, October 9, 1960; leader: Robert Knoble)

"Hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoooooooo!"  
Again and again  
He called, out of the night-blue,  
On the path from the glen!

Then came eerie reply  
Of the Great Horned Owl:  
His calls to outvie -  
The Great Human Fowl;

A low one for him,  
A high one for her,  
A call that was slim,  
From a youngster a-whirr!

Star-net of the night,  
A creature to reach;  
Though far, out of sight,  
A communing and speech!

numbers on these bands and identified the swan as "Zack", an apparent member of "The Ultra-light Project", which is an ongoing plan to establish a vibrant Atlantic breeding population of Trumpeter Swans. The project is sponsored by Environmental Studies at Aerie in Maryland and Defenders of Wildlife and I refer you to the August 2002 issue of *Birding* magazine (vol.34, no. 4, pp. 338-345) for the article entitled "Should Trumpeter Swans be Introduced to the Eastern United States and Canada?" by Bill Whan, Gerry Rising, and Ruth E. Shea for an excellent discussion of the pros and cons of reintroducing this species in the eastern half of the continent.

Other interesting records at the Batavia WWTP in August included Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead and an impressive 309 Ruddy Ducks on the 17<sup>th</sup>. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, Bill Watson discovered a slightly early



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	11	1	Niagara Falls	Klick
Pied-billed Grebe	20	1 ad., 8yg.	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	31	10	Buckhorn I. SP	O'Donnell
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	17; 24	1;2	Batavia WWTP	Klick; Watson
"	25	4	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
D.-crested Cormorant	3, 16	41, 103	Motor Island	Watson
"	20	319 ad, 9 yg.	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	28	1093	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	31	52	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
American Bittern	17	3	Oak Orchard WMA	Klick, Harris
"	24	3	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Great Egret	2 - 25	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	3, 16, 22	22, 6, 7	Motor Island	Watson
"	4, 17; 22	1, 2; 1	Times Beach; Buffalo	Klick, Harris; Hess
"	6; 11	2; 1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg; Klick
"	10	2	Wainfleet, Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
"	15	1	Port Colborne, Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	31	55	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Black-cr. Night-Heron	10	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	D'Anna
"	10	1	Windmill Pt., Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
* <u>Yel.-cr. Night-Heron</u>	10	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Mute Swan	3	35 ad.	Crescent Beach, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	6	31	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	11	28	Fort Erie, Ont.	Klick, Harris
<u>Trumpeter Swan</u>	24	1 banded	Batavia WWTP	Watson
American Wigeon	24	1	Niagara Falls	Klick, Harris
Blue-winged Teal	1	1	Crescent Beach, Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
"	10	13	Windmill Pt., Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
"	24; 25	20; 20	Batavia WWTP	Watson; Morgante
"	25	20	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Northern Shoveler	4	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
"	17	24	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	22	1	Times Beach	Hess
"	25	30	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	31	3	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Northern Pintail	25	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Green-winged Teal	10	1	Windmill Pt., Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
"	10	1	Crescent Beach, Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
"	24	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Canvasback	<u>17F, 24; 24</u>	2, 2; 2	Batavia WWTP	Klick; Watson
"	<u>21</u>	2	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Redhead	24	1	Niagara Falls	Klick, Harris



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	25	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Greater Scaup	<u>24F</u>	2	Niagara Falls	Klick
Lesser Scaup	4	2	Dunnville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	11	3	Niagara Falls	Klick, Harris
"	17, 24, 31	1, 1, 1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Bufflehead	<u>10F</u>	1	Windmill Pt., Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
"	<u>11</u>	1	Niagara Falls	Klick
"	<u>23, 27</u>	1	Windmill Pt, Ont.	Yoerg
"	<u>24; 25</u>	1; 1	Batavia WWTP	Klick
Red-br. Merganser	20	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Common Merganser	11	21	Fort Erie, Ont.	Klick
"	18	4	Mohawk Bay, Ont.	Andrle et al
Ruddy Duck	17	309	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	24	306	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	25	200	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Osprey	6	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	7, 19	1, 1	Sinking Ponds NS	Holmes
"	9	2, 1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg
"	25	2	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
"	26	1	Barcelona	DeFrancisco
"	30	1	Persia	Andrle
Bald Eagle	24; 25	1; 1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris; Morgante
"	31	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Klick, Harris
Merlin	<u>25F</u>	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	<u>31</u>	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick
Peregrine Falcon	<u>4</u>	1	Buffalo	Klick
American Coot	20	2 ad., 2 yg.	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	26	2 ad., 1 yg.	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Black-bellied Plover	3F	13	N. shore of L. Erie, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	7	4	Rock Point PP	Turisk
"	9	3	Tillman WMA	Yoerg
"	14, 23, 27	17, 21, 13	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	17	1	Newstead	Klick, Harris
"	17; 18	1; 2	Woodlawn Beach SP	Klick, Harris; Morgante
Semipalmated Plover	4	4	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
"	6	17	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	7	5	Rock Point PP	Turisk
Greater Yellowlegs	4F	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
"	7	1	Rock Point PP	Turisk
"	14, 23, 27	3, 2, 3	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	25	4	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Solitary Sandpiper	6, 23, 27	2, 2, 1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	10; 25	1; 2	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna; Morgante
"	25	1	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg
"	25	5	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg; K & J Landau; Fox
"	26	1	Sinking Ponds NS	Holmes
*Willet	15	1	Rock Point PP	Klick, Sowinski
"	15	1	Morgan's Point, Ont.	Klick, Sowinski
Whimbrel	3F, 10	1, 1	Crescent Beach, Ont.	Potter, D. Anna et al
"	6, 14, 23	1, 1, 1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	7; 11	1; 1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Turisk; Klick
"	10	1	Rock Point PP	D'Anna (OFO)



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Ruddy Turnstone	7	3	Rock Point PP	Turisk
"	23, 27	1, 2	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
Red Knot	25F	1	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
Sanderling	7	3	Rock Point PP	Turisk
"	17, 20	4, 3	Woodlawn Beach SP	Klick et al
"	17; 18	4; 3	Woodlawn Beach SP	Watson; Morgante
"	24; 31	4; 7	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris; Berry
Semipalm. Sandpiper	7	48	Rock Point PP	Turisk
White-r. Sandpiper	6F	3	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	7; 10	6; 2	Rock Point PP	Turisk; D'Anna(OFO)
"	17	4	Rock Point PP	Klick, Sowinski
"	17	4	Morgan's Point, Ont.	Klick, Sowinski
"	25	3	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
*Baird's Sandpiper	7F	1	Rock Point PP	Turisk
"	23	9	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	24	6	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	24	3	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	24; 25; 25	3; 8; 7	Batavia WWTP	Watson; Morgante; Yoerg
"	25	3	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
Pectoral Sandpiper	7	1	Rock Point PP	Turisk
"	25	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	25	1; 2	Batavia WWTP	Morgante; Yoerg
"	25	5	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
Stilt Sandpiper	17, 31	14, 1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	17	1	Newstead	Klick, Harris
*Buff-br. Sandpiper	<u>24F</u>	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick
Short-b. Dowitcher	4	1	Rock Point PP	Klick, Harris
"	4	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
"	15	2	Morgan's Point, Ont.	Klick, Sowinski
"	17, 24, 31	3, 3, 3	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	24	2	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris, Watson
"	25	8	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
Common Snipe	17, 24, 31	2, 43, 5	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	25	20	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	25	10	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
American Woodcock	25	1	Amherst	Yoerg
*Red-necked Phalarope	<u>24F</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Watson
"	25; 25	1; 1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante; Yoerg
"	31	1	Batavia WWTP	O'Donnell
Bonaparte's Gull	11	218	Niagara Falls	Klick
"	17	60	Woodlawn Beach SP	Watson
"	18	50	Woodlawn Beach SP	Morgante
Lesser Black-b. Gull	<u>4F</u>	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Caspian Tern	18	30	Woodlawn Beach SP	Morgante
"	18	5	Long Beach PP	Watson
"	24	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, D'Anna
"	25	27	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrle
"	25	3	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	31	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Forster's Tern	24F	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Klick, Harris, D'Anna
* <u>Least Tern</u>	17	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Klick, D'Anna, Watson, Turisk



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	18	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Watson, Rising
Common Nighthawk	21, 26	1, 15	Sinking Ponds NS	Holmes
"	22	5	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	23	2	Buffalo	Morgante
"	24	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
"	25,26,28,30	17,7,4,16	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	26 - 31	1-3	Tonawanda	Hess
Red-headed Wdpkr.	3	1	Crescent Beach, Ont.	Potter
"	4, 20	1, 1	Como Park	Morgante
"	10	3	Windmill Pt., Ont.	D'Anna (OFO)
"	23	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
"	24	3	Point Gratiot, Dunkirk	Klick, Harris
Common Raven	7, 13	2, 1	W. Almond; Andover	Brooks
"	30	2	Alfred	Brooks
Bank Swallow	15	240	Yates	Watson
"	18	1300	Mohawk Point, Ont.	Watson, Rising
Cliff Swallow	24F	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Carolina Wren	12	5	Lancaster	Morgante
"	13, 15, 16	1, 1, 1	Niagara Falls	Roberson
"	18	4	Mohawk Point, Ont.	Watson, Rising
"	20	2	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	21, 23, 25	1, 2, 1	Goat Island	Roberson
"	27	2	Windmill Pt., Ont.	Yoerg
Swainson's Thrush	24F	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Northern Mockingbird	20	2	Woodlawn	Klick
Nashville Warbler	25F	1	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
Magnolia Warbler	24F	1	Goat Island	Klick, Harris
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	23F	1	Goat Island	Roberson
"	24	1	Goat Island	Klick, Harris
Blackburnian Warbler	24F	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	25	1	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
Prairie Warbler	13	4 (2 banded)	Alfred	Brooks
Cerulean Warbler	24	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Black-and-white Warb.	24F	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	24F	2	Dunkirk	Klick, Harris
Wilson's Warbler	24F	1	Dunkirk	Klick, Harris
Canada Warbler	25F	1	Rock Point PP	Wagner et al (BOS)
"	31	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Henslow's Sparrow	9	4	Lancaster	Yoerg
Bobolink	25	50	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	31	15	Lancaster	Morgante

<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:</b>	<b>267</b>
<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Total for the year 2002:</b>	<b><u>273</u></b>

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.



# A COLLECTION OF TRIBUTES TO ARTHUR SCHAFFNER (1927-2002)

## FOREWARD

*by Bill Burch*

Art Schaffner, a person of remarkable abilities, will be long remembered by those who knew him well. He had a passion for birds, which began in childhood. His extraordinary powers of memory will be recounted in some of the accompanying tributes. Less well known is that his intelligence also was of a high order. It is little wonder that he became one of the premier birders in this area.

Even though Art died only recently, he is scarcely known to newer Buffalo Ornithological Society (BOS) members; the ravages of manic depression had isolated him for his final 10 years. Several people who did know him well have given these reminiscences to acquaint others with Art.

## A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ART SCHAFFNER

*by Bill Burch*

Art was born November 29, 1927, and raised in east Buffalo. His mother was a private secretary, and his father a clerk in the public schools. Art, the first child, had three siblings, Alice, Carol and Robert, born at two year intervals. The Museum of Science was less than a mile distant so the four children walked to it at every opportunity, taking classes in everything from art appreciation to biology. The place was bursting with activity for young and old alike. Evening classes in birding were taught by birders such as Heather Thorpe.

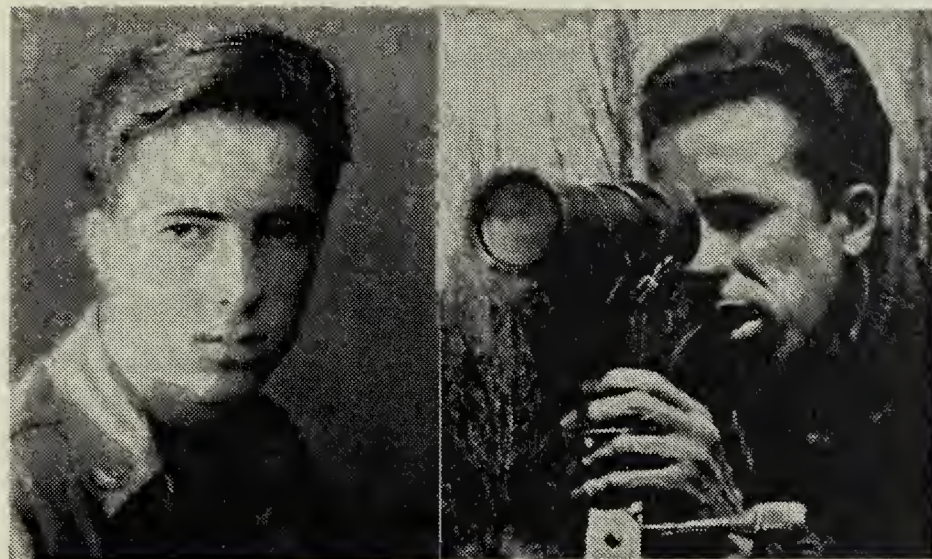
At the age of 17, in 1945, Art joined the BOS at the urging of the recognized leaders, and became an active member the next year.

Art volunteered for the Army in 1946, and spent three years in Japan (age 18-21) in the Army of Occupation, receiving an Honorable Discharge in October 1949. He enjoyed the experience in Japan, and while there he helped at a Christian church. Art always did have a strong religious attitude. After returning to Buffalo, Art attended the Buffalo Bible Institute.

He joined the Longshoreman's Union, and worked at unloading grain boats, but not for a long time. Next, he

attended the University of Miami in Florida for one and a half years.

Around 1958 he became employed at the Buffalo Post Office. He had worked there two years when, now in his early 30s, he had a breakdown. After evaluation at several hospitals, it was evident that he was the victim of a manic depressive condition. For the rest of his life he would need to be heavily medicated. Sensing that the medication was destroying his mind, he frequently stopped taking it. At such times he got into conflicts with family, friends and outsiders.



Art Schaffner in Japan, age about 19

Courier-Exp. photo, 1963, age 34

Art lived in a house on Leonard Street with his mother from 1981 until two years after her death in 1982. In 1985 he was able to obtain a nice apartment in the Kenfield housing project, and remained there into 1994. When it was no longer safe for him to be alone, he moved to Briarwood Manor, an assisted living home in Lockport. There he received attentive care for seven years, until he was finally hospitalized in September, 2001.

Art, when at his best, was an enjoyable and knowledgeable fellowbirder. He was on many BOS trips, short and longer ones. For example, he was in the party of the second fabulous owling weekend at Amherst Island, Ontario, in 1984. Then, on a Hawk Cliff trip in 1985 (at age 57), he shared a travel trailer with two birding friends. (Before leaving, he assured them: "I took my medication.")

Art needed someone to guide him through his tribulations. That person was his sister, Alice Scanandoah, who lives in Tonawanda with her husband, Arden. Without her surveillance, Art's life would have been rougher, and likely shorter.

Art Schaffner died May 14, 2002. He was 74 years old. He directed that his ashes be spread over Thompson's Hole, just downstream from Ft. Erie, Ontario.



That spot, so attractive to fish and fishermen, also draws gulls and waterfowl. It is no wonder that generations of birders have lingered there.

## MEMORIAL SERVICE, JUNE 15, 2002

The memorial service was held in the small Bethany United Methodist Church in the Town of Tonawanda. Art's sister, Alice, is the Church Treasurer. Present were 25 family members which included Art's three married siblings and their children. Only six BOS members attended. Because Art had been isolated so long, most of our current members were not acquainted with him. Moreover, several close friends didn't get word of the service.

Friends were invited to share their memories of Art. Gerry Rising and Bill Watson responded with tributes. Bill Burch spoke about the items on a bench on the podium. On it were two 14"x20" photographs of Art, along with his favored campaign hat and his binoculars. Bill explained that in 1989 he had picked Art up at his Edison Street apartment and brought him to the studio of BOS member Linc Nutting where the striking photographs were made. (The binoculars were 7x50 individual focus, Marsott model of E. Leitz, still in good alignment and giving a clear view).

At the luncheon the talk was animated, and we all learned more about Art. His brother Robert, six years younger, had become a birder and enjoyed visits from Art at his home in Phoenix, AZ.

Art's family had not been aware of the extent of his birding activity. We were very gratified to see their surprise and delight when they learned of the high esteem accorded Art by his fellow birders.



Art Schaffner, 1989, age 61. Photographs by Linc Nutting

## SOME MEMORIES OF THE EARLY DAYS

*by John Filor*

John Filor, now of Rochester, spoke of birding with Art Schaffner when they were both attending high school in Buffalo. This was in the early 1940s. Art would call John to tell him about any new sighting, and they would follow it up, often on their bicycles. The Canadian shore of Lake Erie was an attraction for Buffalo birders, so John, Art, and others, including their acquaintance, Bob Andrie, often bicycled there. John believes it may have been he and Art who found at Sherkston the last known nesting of the Piping Plover in the BOS study area. Art was 16 and John 14 years of age at the time. The event is recorded in Beardslee and Mitchell: it states that the last two nests were found there May 28 and 30, 1944. Observers were Andrie, Filor, Hadley, Schaffner et al., with no mention of who was "first".

## ART, A LONGTIME FRIEND

*by Frances Rew*

At the time of his death in May, Art Schaffner had been a faithful member of the BOS for some 57 years and for almost all of that time we had been very good friends. I shall miss him greatly.

Art was still in his teens when he began birding but his talent for the discipline was immediately evident and he was welcomed, encouraged and tutored by the Society's leading ornithologists — Harold Axtell, Harold Mitchell and Bernie Nathan — with whom he spent much time in the field. As a young man he held strong opinions, not always in keeping with popular thought, but usually right. He could be a bit irreverent, impatient with the "dickiebirders", and the older lady birders. Fortunately this phase was not long lasting and soon he was helping the ladies over ditches and sharing his knowledge with all.

His memory was phenomenal. He could recall practically every record of uncommon or rare birds in our area, the date and place of the observation, and the name of the observer. He could remember what you saw more accurately than you could yourself.

Art's knowledge of the abundance, occurrence and breeding ranges of almost all North American birds was remarkable. It was always easier and quicker to talk with Art about a particular bird's status than to look it up, and considerably more fun. Art had a quick wit and a warm sense of humor. However, I was not



amused one cold night at Hawk Mountain in the '50s when I came in late to my bunk in the Adirondack shelter and found my sleeping bag liner shortsheeted and heard muffled chuckles coming from Art's bunk as I struggled with the knots in the dark. He was not above a schoolboy trick.

Birding was not Art's only interest for he was also a scholar of American history, being particularly well versed in the War of 1812 and the Civil War. Religion was also an important part of his life. He told me that he often wished he could have studied for the ministry and perhaps his life would have been easier if he had been able to do so.

What made Art happy? He always spoke with pleasure of the time he spent in Japan with the Army and he greatly enjoyed being with his brother in Arizona. There was always the study of birds and his association with the men whom he revered which brought him pleasure throughout his life in good times and bad. He was especially proud of having been elected a Fellow of the Society in 1989. He considered this an honor which he never expected to receive. He was doubly pleased in that Harold Axtell had prepared the citation welcoming him as a Fellow. Harold had listed his many contributions to the Society and then made note of his outstanding ability in field identification. In final tribute it might be well to set forth some of the characteristics Harold mentioned:

*Your generous thoughtfulness and ability in helping other members in matters of identification and other problems is much appreciated. Your well known fabulous memory serves as an ever ready source of valuable and interesting detailed information regarding ornithological events, records, bird-finding, and the names of people involved in the ornithological history of the Niagara Region.*

*You tend to note identifying characters on birds that other members of a birding group may overlook and thereby add further verification to otherwise possibly questionable identifications.*

*Your outstanding caution and conscientious thoroughness insure unfailing correctness and reliability in your field identifications and your reports of them.*

*Your meticulous honesty in your field techniques sets an example which is an inspiration and pleasure to observe.*

Art Schaffner was basically a kind and compassionate person who treasured his friends as we treasured him. We are the poorer for this passing.

## ART SCHAFFNER

*by Gerry Rising*

As a youngster living in Rochester, I met Art a few times, the first around 1940, when Art and I were both about 13 yrs old. There were enough times for me to realize his remarkable abilities. He was not only able to identify birds more quickly and accurately than the rest of us — often by their unique call notes — but he had an encyclopedic knowledge of the regional avifauna. I was envious of Art, and, frankly, he paid me and other neophytes little attention.

Art was largely self trained, although he was always ready to accept information from the Axtells and Beardslees and Brockners and Mitchells and Savages and Ulrichs, those wonderful field birders of the rich early years of the BOS.

After a wartime hiatus for both Art and me, I returned to birding as editor of *The Kingbird*, journal of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. In that capacity I came to know Art Schaffner quite differently. He wrote a fine paper that I edited and published, and through that contact we became good friends.

Sadly, when years later I moved to Buffalo, I found a quite different Art Schaffner. Usually heavily medicated, he could barely communicate, but his mind remained clear. Several of us occasionally took Art birding, but it was always a challenge. Despite this, however, he remained a trusted source of information about birds.

I recall Art Schaffner with great affection.

## IN MEMORY OF ART SCHAFFNER

*by David and Debbie Suggs*

When Debbie and I joined the BOS in the fall of 1983, Maxine Barber quickly assigned us to the October Count. She teamed us with Art Schaffner to cover section 7 on the Niagara Peninsula. Maxine explained that Art needed a ride and we would need an experienced participant on our first count. What an unforgettable day — it became a marathon introduction to the birds and habitats of the peninsula and the start of a friendship with a great character and birder.

Art's name was so familiar, but I did not immediately know why. When we picked him up at his Buffalo apartment, a man from the past seemed to appear from the morning darkness, with his signature hat, white beard and brass field glasses. He enthusiastically began



talking birds and local bird history and never let up all day.

I began to realize that I recognized his name because I had read it over and over in *The Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*. I had purchased this book while attending children's bird classes at the Science Museum in 1965. Almost twenty years later, we were out in the field with one of those classic names; one of the birders who contributed to the region's foremost reference.

From Port Colborne to Rock Point Park and on to Wainfleet Bog and the Line and Concession Roads, Art led us through the section finding and counting memorable birds. Life birds included a flock of Golden Plovers on the back roads and a Merlin at Rock Point. He amazed us as he identified flyover species by their call notes and a flock of Pectoral Sandpipers flying into the distance. Later, Art provided us with a copy of his typed verification report describing the Merlin. This report opened our eyes to the thoroughness and seriousness of the BOS record system.

Debbie and I had the pleasure of knowing Art through a time in his life when he was holding his own, maintaining his health and living independently.

## AN APPRECIATION OF ART

*by Michael Turisk*

Although I had not spoken with Art for many years, I feel compelled to pay tribute to the man who I had come to know when I was an enthralled young birder nearly eighteen years ago. Art was extraordinarily generous with his time and willingly shared his vast knowledge of birds and nature. I cherish several fond memories, including a glorious June morning birding Wheeler's Gulf, where Art directed my attention to an unfamiliar, song high within the forest canopy — my life Acadian Flycatcher.

I appreciated Art's patience and his impish sense of humor was often evident, especially when the discussion drifted from birds. It seemed as if there was never a dull moment while in his company!

He was undoubtedly an instrumental figure in forging my current consciousness about the natural world and gave me the opportunity to expand my birding horizons during a period when my resources were limited. The briefness of our time notwithstanding, I am grateful to say that I am Art Schaffner's friend. Thank you, Art.

## ART SCHAFFNER REMEMBERED

*by Bill Watson*

Art had a passion for ornithology. He was a prominent figure in the BOS and in Western New York birding for nearly 60 years. He became an Associate Member of BOS in 1945, an Active Member in 1946, a Citation Member in 1981, and was elected a Fellow in 1989.

In his later years when he could not go out birding, he would call and ask what birds I had seen recently. I would take out my field note book and read him records of the past several weeks. He would make many comments and ask about other records. I was continually amazed by his ability to remember a multitude of avian records, and to analyze them into a historical context. He often could give both the year and date of past noteworthy records, and if a bird was seen on a BOS field trip, he could name the leader.

Recently I told Art that I was going to write an article about a record late Tufted Titmouse nesting for New York State, and that I wanted to review its expansion and status in the state. Art advised me to read Steve Eaton's 1959 article in *The Kingbird* which describes its expansion into the state, Edna McMurtry's 1955 *Kingbird* article on the historical status of it and other birds of Allegany County, and of course Bent's account in his *Life Histories of North American Birds*. I was amazed that he could reference each article in such detail. Of course, I should not have been, such recall was typical of Art Schaffner.

Art loved the timing of the natural phenomena. Ornithology was the avocation, vocation, passion and love of his life. He will be deeply missed by the many people that knew him in the birding community, and his passing is a loss to all of us.



## The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs Plans to Change Its Name

by Bill Watson

At the September 20-22, 2002, meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Kevin McGowan, chairman of the committee charged with determining a new name for the organization, argued the current name obscures the purpose and the membership base of the organization. In particular, the name disguises the fact that individuals can become members, does not indicate the organization manages the state ornithological database, and it was suggested the phrase "Bird Clubs" is weak.

The purpose of the Federation is (1) to help birders in the state meet one another and share ideas, (2) to promote joint ornithological research and education, (3) to secure a stronger voice in conservation matters and (4) to publish a state ornithological journal.

Although created as an association of clubs, the Federation welcomes, and depends upon, individuals for its financial backbone. In 2001, 51 member clubs provided \$1,663 while 685 individuals provided \$15,013 to the organization's treasury. Yet the name, Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, does not even remotely suggest that individuals can join. In 2001, the Federation had an income of \$20,734 while expenses tallied \$24,734.

It was suggested, New York State Ornithological Society, New York State Ornithological Association, New York State Bird Society, or New York State Birding Association indicate: (1) an organization of individuals rather than clubs, (2) "Association" or "Society" indicates an open membership — that is, anyone could join and benefit, (3) "Ornithology" suggests the group is maintaining data and records (which is true) and promoting research, (4) "Ornithological Association/Society" suggests it might be the arbiter of the state list, and might publish a state journal (which it does) and (5) with New York State at the front, it would be more easily recognized.

If you would like to support the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs in its endeavor to document the ornithology of the state, to foster interest in and appreciation of birds and to protect birds and their habitats, and if you would like to receive the state quarterly journal *The Kingbird*, become a member. Please send your name, address, and a check for \$22 to **Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., P.O. Box 440, Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759.**

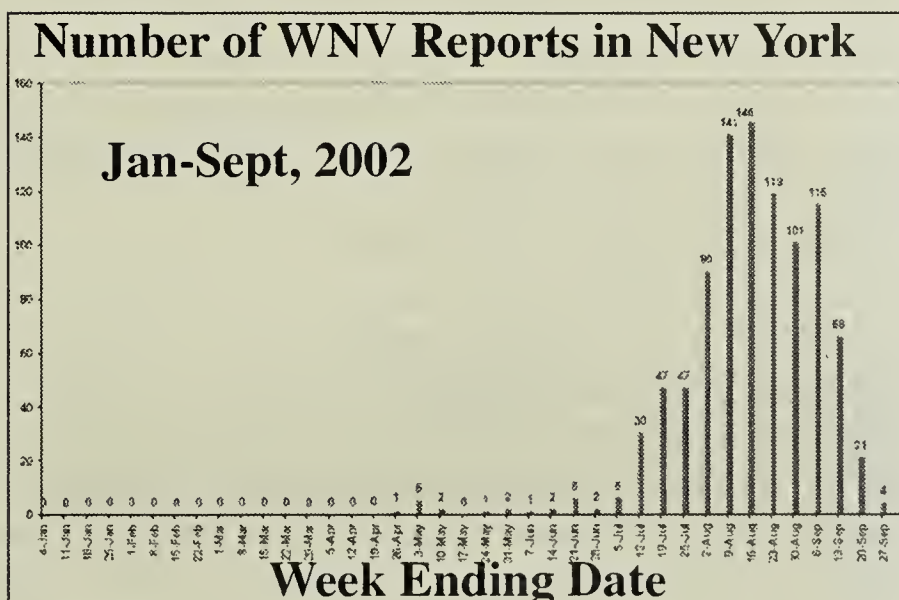
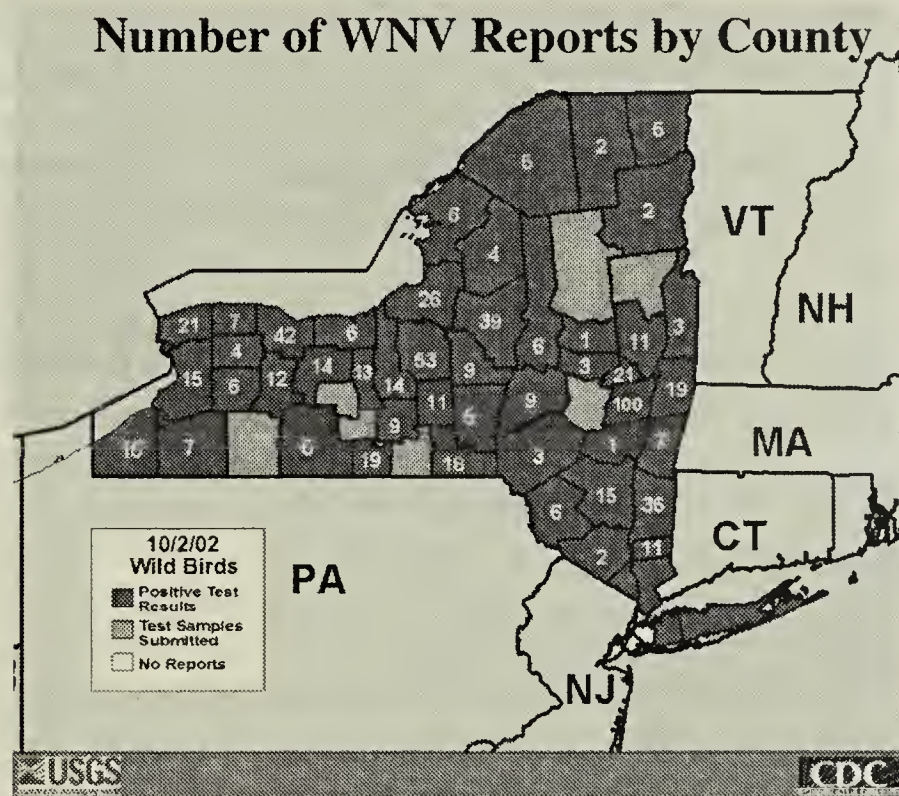
## West Nile Virus - New York

From US Geological Survey

([http://cindi.usgs.gov/hazard/event/west\\_nile/new\\_york/ny\\_avian\\_oct\\_02.html](http://cindi.usgs.gov/hazard/event/west_nile/new_york/ny_avian_oct_02.html))

These county and county-equivalent data are based on tests of tissue samples from dead and diseased wild birds, provided by state health officials. Many of these data represent crows, which are especially sensitive to West Nile Virus (WNV). Note that the map includes all areas of positive (confirmed or probable) WNV results, but not necessarily all areas with submitted samples or no reports.

Note: These data are provisional and may be revised or adjusted in the future. The number of reported cases for each county is shown in the map below.







**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 1020 Humboldt Parkway  
 Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

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 Ithaca, NY 14853-4301

## November – December Calendar

**November 13: BOS meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science.

**November 17: Niagara River** joint trip with Rochester GOS, for gulls and waterfowl. Meet at 9:00 AM at Fort Niagara State Park in the parking lot just outside the old fort. Leaders: BOS Brendan Klick 839-1792 and GOS Bob Spahn.

**December 8: Buffalo Waterfront and Niagara River, Ontario.** Meet at 8:00 AM at Vermont and Busti. Leader: Mike Hamilton 881-6709.

**December 11: BOS meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science.

**December 15: Sunday. BOS Buffalo, NY Christmas Count.** Compiler: Bill Bogacki (674-5781).

**December 21: Saturday. Beaver Meadow Christmas Count.** Compiler: Bill Michalek (457-3228).

**December 27: Oak Orchard Christmas Count.** Compiler: Gail Seamans 585-937-5105.

**December 28: Saturday. Niagara Falls ON-NY Christmas Count.** Contact Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com) to work on the NY side. Contact Kayo Roy (905-892-4433 or kayoroy@niagara.com) to work on the Canadian side. All payments go to the compiler, Kayo Roy, 13 Kinsman Court, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada L0S 1E3.

**December 28: Saturday. Wilson-Lake Plains Christmas Count.** Compiler: Garner Light (772-5110) garnerlight@hotmail.com

**January 5: Sunday. Hamburg-East Aurora Christmas Count.** Compiler: Brendan Klick (839-1792)

*Note: All field trips are a full day in length and participants should pack a lunch. If you are interested in leading a field trip, call Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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# The PROTHONOTARY



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## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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### THE MONTH: September

by Robert Wagner

It was the sunniest September for the area since 1941 and the warmest since 1961. And some BOS observers felt that bird migration was as sluggish as the weather.

Art Clark, who has been counting migratory bird kills at area TV towers since 1967, found a single kill on the 15th, 27 on the 16th and 5 on the 28th. But Clark said the numbers were not unusually low for recent years. He has found a consistent decline in seasonal kills at the towers. "We once had as many as four thousand in a season," he said. "On a couple of occasions we had more than a thousand in a single morning. But in seven of the past ten years we've had under a hundred for the entire season. We've had a few exceptional days – about three hundred kills on September 10th, 1996, and about two hundred on October 4th this year."

Clark and his collaborator, Dr. Sara Morris of Canisius College, are having a report on their observations published in the *Northeastern Naturalist*. Others monitoring tower kills have had a similar experience, he said. Clark said that explanations have focused around

five theories: (1) The numbers of migratory birds have declined. He said there has been a research report of a 40 percent decline in migrants across the Gulf of Mexico over the past 20 years. (2) An increase in predators and scavengers at tower sites. (3) Increased "light pollution" as a result of urban

sprawl may in some way dilute the attraction of tower lights. (4) A species genetic adaptation that has evolved from survival of birds not fatally drawn to the lights. (5) A change in weather patterns involving the cold fronts, overcast skies and winds associated with migratory influx.

Another intriguing report was the earliest ever arrival of a Merlin to what has become an annual winter roosting grounds for the species at the University at Buffalo South Campus between Main Street and Bailey Avenue. Peter Yoerg, who regularly checks the site on bicycle from his home on Shirley Avenue, spotted the first arrival on Sept. 12. The bird was joined by at least four others in October, Yoerg said. At least two are using the same evening roosting place, in Austrian pines, as favored in previous years.

We were able to find little reference in the literature to communal roosting by Merlins. The exception, as noted by Yoerg, is a report in *Hawks in Flight* (Dunne *et al.*, 1988) as follows: "Surprisingly, in at least one location, wintering Merlins are known to roost in a communal fashion. Each evening, between eight and ten birds gather along the road that leads to the end of a sandy spit before retiring into a small holly forest at dusk. At dawn, the birds disperse to hunt and feed." The site was not identified. Elsewhere, the authors describe the Merlin as "usually solitary (because they have a bad disposition)..." This is the fifth year Yoerg has found Merlins at the UB campus. It started with a single bird and increased each year to the maximum of five in 2001. All have been in either immature or adult female plumage. He thinks the birds may be related.

In *Birds of the Niagara Frontier* (Beardslee & Mitchell, 1965) Merlin is listed as "sporadic very

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rare" in winter, and a rare transient that "breeds occasionally," although the evidence for the latter seemed a bit inconclusive.

According to *Birds of Prey* (Snyder & Snyder, 1991) the Merlin's breeding populations in the western United States and southern Canada experienced "an unprecedented increase" in the 1970s and 1980s "fueled in part by a recovery from the stresses of the pesticide era ... and "a remarkable spread of the species into urban environments." The urban movement may have been facilitated, the report suggested, by the "just previous invasion of the same urban areas by ... crows and magpies." Merlins were credited with a proclivity for taking over abandoned crow or magpie nests to lay their own

eggs.

Still another curiosity of the season was a hybrid goose observed in Barcelona Harbor on the 30th. Leonard De Francisco and Tom Simmons believed it to be a cross between a Greater White-fronted Goose and a Snow Goose. De Francisco included a detailed sketch with his description of the bird, which was in a large flock of Canada Geese.

However, the Statisticians were only able to conclude that the variable characters which occur in numerous hybrids precluded a certain determination of this bird's parent species.

And, again, the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant at Batavia demonstrated its distinctive allure for Ruddy Ducks. No less than 290 were reported there on the 14th by William Watson. And as usual, too, a few

Eared Grebes turned up. Four were reported by Brendan Klick on the 7th and 29th.

Only new species for the year was the Connecticut Warbler. It was reported at Rock Point by Jim Smith, *et al.*, on the 12th and 23rd and late at Tiff Nature Preserve on the 28th by Andrie and William Bogacki.

The average temperature of 66.9 °F in September was, according to the U.S. Weather Bureau at Buffalo, more than five degrees warmer than normal. The month high temperature was 91 °F recorded on the 9th. The overall warmest day was the 20th with a high and low of 85 and 72 °F, respectively (a record highest low temperature for that date).

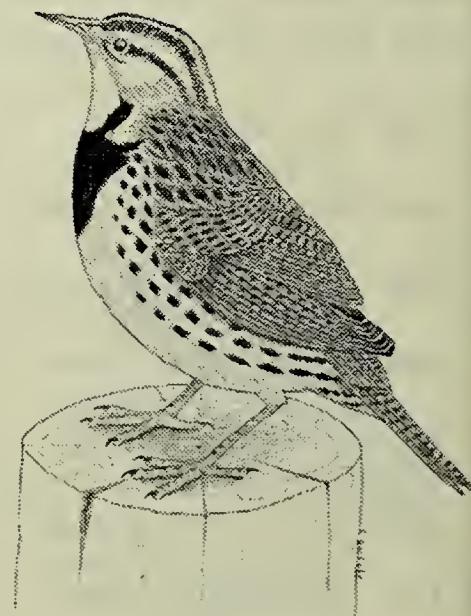
"Most of the month was very dry," noted the Weather Bureau. "Rainfall totaled 2.54 inches at the Airport - 1.30 inches below normal for the month. But 1.48 inches fell from the remnants of Tropical Depression Isidore, which set a new daily record for Sept. 27th." Monthly average sunshine was 73 percent, 20 percent above normal.

## Membership Committee Annual Report

By Karen Landau

The current BOS membership (as of 10/9/02) is 234 members, down 9 from last year. We welcomed 2 new Corresponding members and 11 new Associate members this year. Our total membership now consists of 49 Corresponding members, 97 Associate members, 77 Active members, 4 Citation members, 6 Fellows & 1 Honorary member. Three members were made Active from Associate: Patricia Bogan, Mike Desha, and Mike Turisk. We note with sadness the passing of three members over the past year: Jane Cole, Cathy Mueller, and Art Schaffner. Nineteen members either requested cancellation or were dropped for non-payment.

There are updated 2002 roster inserts (new members & address changes) available to any member at meetings or by contacting Karen Landau, Membership Chairperson, at kjlandau@localnet.com or (716) 941-3869 or 9195 State Rd., Colden, NY 14033





## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	30	1	Golden Hill SP	Morgante
Pied-billed Grebe	13	3 young	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Horned Grebe	30	3	Somerset	Morgante
* <u>Eared Grebe</u>	7;29	4;4	Batavia WWTP	Klick
"	14	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
D.-crested Cormorant	6	43, 9 nstlgs	Motor I.	Watson
"	11;13	804;744	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	15	500	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
"	21	<u>6500</u>	Rock Point PP, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
American Bittern	5	1	Iroquois NWR	Chilton
Great Egret	3;23;25;28	3	Tifft NP	Several observers
"	6;13	4	Niagara River	Hess;Watson
"	7;15;19	2;2;3	Times Beach	Several observers
"	8	2	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14;29	2;2	Oak Orchard WMA	Several observers
"	29	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Snow Goose	<u>22F</u>	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	<u>29</u>	1	Newstead	Klick
American Wigeon	14	5	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	14	18	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
Blue-winged Teal	14F	37	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Northern Shoveler	14	92	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Northern Pintail	14	4	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
Canvasback	<u>4</u>	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	<u>7;29</u>	2;1	Batavia WWTP	Klick
"	<u>14</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	<u>4</u>	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	29	11	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	30	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Greater Scaup	<u>14</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	28	6	Buffalo	Morgante
Lesser Scaup	7	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	21	4	Lowbanks, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
White-winged Scoter	7F	2	Golden Hill SP	Klick, Harris
Ruddy Duck	14	290	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	22	1	West Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg
Osprey	4-28	7 reports	Throughout region	Several observers
Bald Eagle	7	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Merlin	12-30	1	UB South Campus	Yoerg
	15	1	Carroll	DeFrancisco
	18	1	Falconer	DeFrancisco



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	20	1	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	26	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	30	2	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Peregrine Falcon	2	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Skalicky
"	30	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Virginia Rail	7	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Sora	7	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
American Coot	4;13;24	1;1;1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Black-bellied Plover	8	20	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	29	1	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
Amer. Golden-Plover	1F;8	6;10	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	14	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	29	3	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Semipalmated Plover	3	3	Tifft NP	Watson
"	15	8	Tifft NP	Morgante
Greater Yellowlegs	3	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	14	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	30	4	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Lesser Yellowlegs	14	20	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	15;28	5;1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	30	4	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Solitary Sandpiper	29	2	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Ruddy Turnstone	22	6	Somerset	Morgante
Red Knot	1;8	6;8	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	13	4	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Andrle, Thill
White-r. Sandpiper	1	2	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	8	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Baird's Sandpiper	1;8	10;2	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	1	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	2	2	Fort Erie, Ont.	Skalicky
"	7	2	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	29	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Pectoral Sandpiper	14	5	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Stilt Sandpiper	1	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	1;8	2;1	West Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Buff-br. Sandpiper	8L	2	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Short-b. Dowitcher	7	3	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Common Snipe	7;29	9;5	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	15	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	22	1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	29	15	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Wilson's Phalarope	1L	1	West Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-necked Phalarope	7	4	Golden Hill SP	Klick, Harris
Caspian Tern	2	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Skalicky
"	3	3	Tifft NP	Watson
"	6;13	7;11	Beaver I. SP	Hess
"	21	12	N. shore, L. Erie	Potter, D'Anna
"	<u>28L</u>	2	Erie Basin Marina	Morgante
Common Nighthawk	1	6	Amherst	Morgante
"	1-17	1-8	Tonawanda	Hess
"	1	7	Oak Orchard WMA	S&T O'Donnell
"	2,3,4	3,2,21	Falconer	DeFrancisco



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	7	1	Golden Hill SP	Klick, Harris
"	8	11	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Ruby-t. Hummingbird	15	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Red-headed Wdpkr.	7	2	Wendt Beach	Skalicky
"	7	2	Lakeside Beach SP	Klick, Harris
"	8	1	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky
"	8	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	29	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	12F	1	Tifft NP	Klick
"	25	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Olive-s. Flycatcher	7L	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Least Flycatcher	15	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	23L	1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
Gr. Cr. Flycatcher	15L	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Eastern Kingbird	8	1	Tifft NP	Zebehazy, Watson, BOS
Yellow-thr. Vireo	7	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	8	3	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky
Warbling Vireo	1-19L	1	Goat Island	Roberson
"	15	6	Tifft NP	Morgante
Philadelphia Vireo	5-26	1-3	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	15	1	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	15	1	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
"	28L	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Common Raven	6	2	Alfred	Brooks
Tree Swallow	14	900	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Carolina Wren	1-22	2	Goat Island	Roberson
"	8;25	2;1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	15	1	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	2	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	29	1	Batavia	Klick, Harris
"	30	2	Lancaster	Morgante
Winter Wren	14F	1	Fort Niagara SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	14F	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
Golden-cr. Kinglet	29F	1	Niagara Falls	S&T O'Donnell
"	30	3	Golden Hill SP	Morgante
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	21F	2	Goat Island	Roberson
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	29L	3	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Gray-cheeked Thrush	14F	1	Fort Niagara SP	D'Anna
"	17-28	1-3	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	21	1	Niagara Falls	Roberson
"	25	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Swainson's Thrush	5-28	1-6	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	14	6	Fort Niagara SP	D'Anna
"	15	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	25	2	Tifft NP	Watson
Brown Thrasher	28	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
American Pipit	14F	5	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	22	2	Somerset	Morgante
"	28	2	Buffalo	Morgante
Golden-wing. Warbler	15L	1	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
Tennessee Warbler	2F	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	5-24	1-2	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	19;20;22	3;1;1	Goat Island	Roberson
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	29	1	East Aurora	Holmes
Orange-cr. Warbler	15F	1	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
"	22	1	Goat Island	Roberson
"	26	2	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
Nashville Warbler	9-22	1-3	Goat Island	Roberson
"	15;28	2;1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	25	5	Tifft NP	Watson
"	26	9	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
Northern Parula	14F	2	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	14F	1	Wilson-Tusc. SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	15	3	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
"	18;24	1;1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	28	1	Portland	Mosher
"	22L	1	Goat Island	D'Anna et al
Yellow Warbler	12L	1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
Magnolia Warbler	15;28	3;1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Cape May Warbler	14F;23;28	1;2;1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	15	3	Goat Island	D'Anna, Potter
Pine Warbler	29	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	29	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Palm Warbler	23F	1	Goat Island	Potter
"	28	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	23F;24;25	1;4;1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
Blackpoll Warbler	7F	1	Goat Island	Klick, Harris
"	15;28	22;10	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	29	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Black-and-white Warb.	15	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	25	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Northern Waterthrush	14F	1	Fort Niagara SP	Potter
"	15	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
*Connecticut Warbler	12;23	1;1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Wilson's Warbler	3-28	1-6	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	29	1	East Aurora	Holmes
Scarlet Tanager	28	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Lincoln's Sparrow	12;17;24;25	2;1;1;2	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Smith et al
"	19	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	28	1	Pomfret	Mosher
White-thr. Sparrow	15F	1	Amherst SP	Klick, Harris
"	25	4	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	30	12	Golden Hill SP	Morgante
Rusty Blackbird	19F	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	30	6	Golden Hill SP	Morgante
"	30	5	Oak Orchard WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Baltimore Oriole	7L	1	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:** 273

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:** 1

**Total for the year 2002:** 274

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.  
The Prothonotary 108



## Petition to List Cerulean Warbler as Threatened, under Endangered Species Act

**SUMMARY:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, announce a 90-day finding on a petition to list the Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) as threatened, under the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). We find that the petition presented substantial information indicating that listing this species may be warranted. We are initiating a status review to determine if listing the Cerulean Warbler is warranted.

**DATES:** The finding announced in this document was made on September 24, 2002. To be considered in the 12-month finding for this petition, comments and information should be submitted to the Service by January 21, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Data, information, comments, or questions should be submitted to the Field Supervisor, Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 608 East Cherry Street, Room 200, Columbia, MO 65201, or by facsimile to (573) 876-1914. The complete petition finding, supporting literature, and comments are available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Amy Salveter at the Columbia, Missouri, Field Office see ADDRESSES), or at (573) 876-1911, extension 113.

The Cerulean Warbler is a neotropical migratory bird that winters in montane forests of northern South America and breeds in deciduous forests of the eastern United States and southern Canada. The breeding range of Cerulean Warbler generally extends from the eastern Great Plains in eastern North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma; south to Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, northern Alabama and Georgia, and South Carolina; and north to Massachusetts, southern Quebec, southeastern Ontario, Michigan, Wisconsin, and central Minnesota (Hamel 2000a, Rosenberg et al. 2000). Breeding Cerulean Warblers are found in the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys, but appear to be concentrated in the upper Ohio valley in West Virginia and western Pennsylvania (Hamel 2000a, 2000b, Rosenberg et al. 2000). During migration, the birds pass through the southern United States, across the Gulf of Mexico to the highlands of Central America, and on to South America. Cerulean Warblers winter in the middle and lower elevations of the subtropical zone of the eastern slope of the Andes and other mountains in northern South America (Hamel 2000a). Their winter range generally

extends from Colombia and Venezuela south, mostly along the eastern slope of the Andes, to southern Peru and perhaps northern Bolivia (AOU 1998).

The petitioners assert that the Cerulean Warbler is threatened by destruction, modification, or curtailment of habitat or range by logging on public and private lands, construction of water projects e.g., reservoirs, sewer lines and stream channelization), agricultural practices and urbanization through: (1) Loss and fragmentation of breeding habitat in the United States e.g., loss of tall, mature deciduous forest, especially extensive bottomland hardwood forest throughout the floodplain of the Lower Mississippi River Alluvial Valley), (2) loss of winter habitat (within a relatively narrow elevation zone of the Andes in South America), and (3) loss of migratory habitat e.g., development of property along the beaches of Texas, Louisiana, and the Florida panhandle).

According to the petitioners, logging creates smaller and more fragmented forest tracts, resulting in higher rates of Cerulean Warbler nest predation by jays, crows, raccoons, opossums, and snakes. They also cite existing regulations and guidelines as inadequate mechanisms for protecting Cerulean Warbler breeding and wintering habitats on public and private lands.

Finally, the petitioners assert that other natural or human-caused factors affecting the Cerulean Warbler's continued existence are the likely increase in nest parasitism by cowbirds resulting from the destruction and fragmentation of forests as well as direct mortality resulting from collisions with communication towers.

Historical data on the distribution and abundance of Cerulean Warblers are scant. However, it is clear from the nineteenth century accounts of several prominent naturalists that the Cerulean Warbler was a conspicuous and abundant species throughout the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys (Hamel 2000a).

Presently, Cerulean Warblers are much less numerous, and they are absent from some areas where they were abundant (Hamel 2000a, Smith et al. 1996). However, the species has increased in numbers or expanded its range in the northeastern United States (Hamel 1992; R. Mulvihill, in litt. 3 April 2001), Quebec (Ouellet 1967), and Ontario (Eagles 1987, Oliar-nyk and Robertson 1996), perhaps in response to the maturation of previously harvested forests. McCracken (1993) reports that Cerulean Warbler populations remain fairly stable overall in Canada.

Current population trends and estimates are derived from several sources, such as the Breeding Bird Sur-



vey, Breeding Bird Census, Breeding Bird Atlas projects, research and monitoring. Much of the support provided by the petitioners for the listing of Cerulean Warbler under the Endangered Species Act is based on Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) data they cite as an indication of a declining trend for this species. While it is clear that the Cerulean Warbler's range has contracted and the overall population has declined, the species exists at high densities at various locations in the core of its range, populations are increasing in several areas, and new populations have been identified. ***Using a standardized method for extrapolating bird populations from BBS data, the total population of Cerulean Warblers is estimated at 214,000 pairs (K. Rosenberg, in litt. 13 June 2002).*** Roughly 70% of this population is concentrated in the North Cumberland Plateau and Ohio Hills physiographic areas.

The adequacy of the BBS as a method to monitor forest birds, such as Cerulean Warblers, has been questioned (Peterjohn et al. 1995, James et al. 1996). These concerns focus on changes in habitat along roadside routes, which would reduce the detectability of the birds potentially more than their numbers. This is because habitat loss due to development tends to be focused along roadsides, thus areas with habitat lost to development likely will be over-sampled by BBS surveys, with the resulting data possibly overstating the actual decline of the Cerulean Warbler throughout its range. Furthermore, because BBS routes are always located along roadsides, BBS coverage may not adequately sample those forested habitats that frequently are more distant from roads, such as the bottomlands and ridgetops that are preferred by Cerulean Warblers (Hamel 2000a, 2000b). This criticism of BBS suggests that other census techniques might be developed that could be more effective for detecting Cerulean Warblers. For example, recent surveys conducted by canoe on rivers in Missouri have revealed several previously unknown Cerulean Warbler populations (Robbins 2001); however this method would be difficult to implement on a larger scale.

In addition, there are several logistical concerns about the BBS, which arise from the nature of BBS as a volunteer program. Some biologists believe that another problem with BBS data for Cerulean Warblers is the potential for unfamiliarity with the song of this species among BBS observers (Hamel 2000a). We and our colleagues who oversee and analyze BBS data believe that BBS data are of questionable value for reliably determining trends for making listing determinations even for declining mature forest associated species, like the Cerulean Warbler. For example, BBS routes in eastern Kentucky and West Virginia, particu-

larly in the more remote parts of those States where Cerulean Warblers are numerous e.g., in West Virginia, Cerulean Warblers were reported from 74 percent of the sites surveyed during the Cerulean Warbler Atlas Project, Rosenberg et al. 2000), were not uniformly covered throughout the period of the BBS; therefore, trend calculations cannot effectively utilize the data from some of these routes (Hamel 2000a). The net effect of these differences in coverage is to introduce an unknown amount of uncertainty into the BBS trend estimates, particularly in some of the areas central to the Cerulean Warbler's breeding range (Hamel 2000a). Moreover, Sauer (1993) indicated that, while sufficient sampling intensity in the BBS existed to detect a 50 percent [[Page 65085]] decline in population of the species over a 25-year period with a probability of 0.9, low relative abundance of this species mandated caution when interpreting trend results. ***The BBS estimate of the Cerulean Warbler's average annual population trend (for the period 1966 to 1996) of -3.7 percent per year (95 percent confidence interval -2.5 to -5.0) is based on 236 survey routes. The average annual trend for the survey period 1966 to 1979 (- 5.5 percent per year, n = 113) indicates a significant decline in the Cerulean Warbler population over the first half of the survey period.*** However, the trend estimate for the remainder of the survey period, 1980 to 1996 (-0.4 percent per year, n = 183), is not significantly different from a stable population. These trend estimates suggest that the population declined most dramatically prior to 1980, and may not have declined since then. Whether this represents the primary or sole period of decline or perhaps indicates that, by 1980, populations were reduced to the point that the BBS became a less useful monitoring tool rangewide, is not clear (Hamel 2000b).

Hamel (2000a) stated that land use changes brought about by increasing human populations in the breeding, migratory, and winter range of Cerulean Warbler are the underlying causes of the population decline of the bird in this century. According to Hamel (2000a), Robbins et al. (1992a) compiled the most extensive listing of potential threats facing Cerulean Warblers. This list included six items which they categorized as constraints on the breeding grounds as well as non-breeding season constraints: (1) Loss of mature deciduous forest, especially along stream valleys; (2) fragmentation and increasing isolation of remaining mature deciduous forest; (3) change to shorter (timber harvest) rotation periods and even-aged management, so that less deciduous forest habitat reaches maturity; (4) loss of key tree species, especially oaks from oak wilt and gypsy moths, sycamores from a fungus, elms



from Dutch elm disease, and American chestnuts from chestnut blight; (5) nest parasitism by the brown-headed cowbird; and (6) environmental degradation from acid rain and stream pollution. However, research is needed to determine whether these potential threats affect Cerulean Warbler populations, and if so, whether the effects of these potential threats vary across the species' breeding and winter range. We agree with the petitioner's contention that there appear to be several potential threats to Cerulean Warbler migratory, breeding, and wintering habitats. Demographic data, and especially recruitment data, are currently lacking across the Cerulean Warbler's range, making it impossible to determine the important features of habitat that provide for successful reproduction, thus complicating the evaluation of potential threats to that habitat. We believe there are significant gaps in the threats data currently available to us, including: the degree to which timber management and harvest on privately owned forest habitat constitute a benefit or threat to the species; loss of habitat due to development has not been quantified or analyzed across the species' range; mountaintop mining impacts assessments and modeling effects on individual species, including the Cerulean Warbler, are currently unavailable; the magnitude of wintering habitat loss and its role in the species' decline; and mortality factors during migration.

We have reviewed the petition, supporting documentation, and other information available in our files. On the basis of the best scientific and commercial information, we find that substantial information exists indicating that listing the Cerulean Warbler as threatened may be warranted. When we make a 90-day finding that listing may be warranted, we are required to initiate a review of the status of the species. Following the status review we will issue a 12-month petition finding as required by section 4(b)(3)(B) of the Act. The 12-month finding considers all additional data received during the status review and determines whether listing is warranted. If the 12-month finding is "warranted," we elevate the species to candidate status and assign it a listing priority number. We will then commence work on a proposal to list the species in the order dictated by its listing priority number and the listing priority numbers of other candidate species.

The petitioners also requested that critical habitat be designated for the Cerulean Warbler. We always consider the need for critical habitat designation when listing species. If the 12-month finding determines that listing the Cerulean Warbler is warranted, then the designation of critical habitat will be addressed in the subsequent proposed rule. Public Information Solicited When we make a finding that

substantial information exists to indicate that listing a species may be warranted, we are required to promptly commence a review of the status of the species involved, including providing an opportunity for data and other information to be provided by the public for our consideration. A rangewide status assessment of Cerulean Warbler was completed in April 2000, and this status assessment is available on the Service's Web site at <http://mid-west.fws.gov/endangered/lists/concern.html#Birds>. *This status assessment reviewed most of the information available at that time, so we are primarily interested in receiving data on the species that have become available since April 2000. We request any additional information, comments, and suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested parties concerning the status of the Cerulean Warbler. Of particular interest is information pertaining to the factors the Service uses to determine if a species is threatened or endangered: (1) The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence. If you wish to comment or provide data for our consideration, you may submit your comments and materials to the Field Supervisor, Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 608 East Cherry Street, Room 200, Columbia, Missouri 65201.*

Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Respondents may request that we withhold their home address, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name or address, you must state this request prominently at the beginning of your comment and explain the reason for your request. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. To the extent consistent with applicable law, we will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety. Comments and materials received will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

References Cited You may request a list of all references cited in this document, as [[Page 65086]] well as others, from the Columbia, Missouri Field Office (see ADDRESSES). Author The primary author of this document is **Amy Salveter**, Columbia, Missouri Field Office (see ADDRESSES). Authority The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Dated: September 24, 2002. Steve Williams, Director, Fish and Wildlife Service. [FR Doc. **02-27004** Filed 10-22-02; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 4310-55-P



# Annual Treasurer's Report, 2001-2002

by Thomas O'Donnell

**Checking account – opening balance:** **\$ 9,412.47\*\***

\*\* Distributed: General Fund \$ 6,143.57

(General Operating Exp. \$ 2,840.53, Peregrine Project \$94.20, 2004 Banquet \$600.00, Map Project \$593.02, M.L. Emerson Bequest \$ 2,015.82.)

*Prothonotary* Fund \$ 1,137.60

Special Projects Fund \$ 2,131.30

## Income:

Dues: General Fund \$ 995.00

*Prothonotary* Fund \$ 2805.00

Donations \$ 602.00

Checking account interest \$ 27.95

Date Guide Sales \$ 48.00

Axtell/McVey/Wendling Donation \$ 140.00

BP Foundation matching gift (C. McMurty) \$ 25.00

Donation in memory of Art Schaffner \$ 25.00

**Total Income \$4667.95**

## Expense:

Annual bulk mail fee \$ 120.00

Bulk Postage Account \$ 300.00

*Prothonotary* printing \$2275.43

*Prothonotary* postage \$ 191.77

*Prothonotary* labels \$ 21.59

Membership committee \$ 74.17

Grand Island property tax \$ 175.68

Compiler expenses \$ 72.10

Statistician expenses \$ 135.22

April Count expenses \$ 26.06

Treasurer expenses \$ 46.00

FNYSBC dues \$ 30.00

Museum of Science meeting room \$ 300.00

Museum of Science Vaughan Lecture \$ 100.00

Special Project Fund grants \$ 1700.00

Transfer A/M/W donations to inv. Acct. \$ 140.00

**Total Expense \$5708.02**

Transfer of \$300.00 to 2004 Banquet

**Checking account – closing balance \$ 8,372.40\*\***

\*\*Distributed: General Fund \$ 6,882.29

(General Operating Exp. \$ 3,279.25, Peregrine Project \$94.20, 2004 Banquet \$900.00, Map Project \$593.02, M.L. Emerson Bequest \$ 2,015.82.)

*Prothonotary* Fund \$ 1,033.81

Special Projects Fund \$ 431.30

Donation in memory of Art Schaffner \$ 25.00

Axtel/McVey/Wendling Fund value as of 9/27/02 **\$47,663.49\***

\*Balance includes 2001 Income of \$2723.89 available for Special Projects



# BUDGETS FOR THE YEARS 2002-2003 & 2003-2004 FOR THE BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

*by Thomas O'Donnell, Lynne Landon, Ann Vogt, Terry Yonker, Gerry Rising (Budget Committee) 10/23/02*

Following are the proposed budgets for the BOS fiscal years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 for the General/Prothonotary Fund and the Special Projects Fund. Although the Society must soon vote on the 2002-2003 General/Prothonotary Fund budget **only**, it is helpful to anticipate future needs and/or the spreading of expenses over more than one year. To this end the 2003-2004 preliminary budget is included as a guide only and will need to be revised and voted on next year.

Lastly, please note that each year's ending bank balance for the General/Prothonotary Fund is also a general operating contingency for that year, which we have assumed will not be needed. Additionally, the 2004 Banquet Fund could be further temporary insurance which would need to be reimbursed if used.

<b>ESTIMATED INCOME:</b>	<b>General/Prothon. Fund:</b>		<b>Special Projects Fund:</b>	
	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>
<i>Opening Balance:</i>	\$5,900.00	\$2,300.00	\$3,155.19	\$0.00
<i>2002-2003 Dues:</i>	\$3,900.00	\$3,900.00	-	-
<i>Date Guide Sales</i>	\$0.00	\$0.00	-	-
<i>Special Membership Premiums</i>	\$800.00	\$800.00	-	-
<i>Advertising (Prothonotary)</i>	\$0.00	\$0.00	-	-
<i>Interest (Special Projects Fund)</i>	-	-	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
<b>Total estimated income:</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$7,000.00</b>	<b>\$6,155.19</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>

<i>General operating expense (recent actual amounts have varied from \$776 to \$1,762 excluding contributions)</i>	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	-	-
<i>Contributions</i>	\$200.00	\$200.00		
<i>Speakers Fund (reimbursable expense for travel, lodging)</i>	\$300.00	\$300.00	-	-
<i>Vaughn Lecture Series (reinstitution of support)</i>	\$100.00	\$100.00	-	-
<i>Prothonotary (current estimate)</i>	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	-	-
<i>Meeting Room (annual contribution to Buffalo Museum of Science for our bi-weekly use of the Cummings Room)</i>	\$300.00	\$300.00	-	-
<i>2004 Banquet Fund (+ \$900 set aside in 1999-2002)</i>	\$1200.00	\$1500.00		
<i>Delegates to Annual Meeting of Federation of NYS Bird Clubs (reimbursable expense for travel, lodging)</i>	\$300.00	\$300.00	-	-
<i>Young People's Weekend (to encourage/foster young people's interest in birds)</i>	\$100.00	\$100.00	-	-
<i>BOS Graphics Coordination and Update (to create a more unified and contemporary image for all BOS printed matter)</i>	\$300.00	\$0.00	-	-
<i>Map Project (to update BOS section maps and identify key birding areas and species therein)</i>	\$600.00	-		
<i>BOS Yearly list (to include graphics to show relative abundance and scarcity of each species for each month of the year)</i>	\$800.00	-		
<i>Beardslee &amp; Mitchell update</i>	\$100.00	\$100.00		
<i>Special Project Grants</i>	-	-		
<b>Proposed budget:</b>	<b>\$8,300.00</b>	<b>\$6,900.00</b>		

<b>Ending bank balance (general operating contingency):</b>	<b>\$2,300.00</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
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## GRANT APPLICATION FOR 2003 AWARD

### Proposal Cover Sheet

. Check one: Organization \_\_\_\_ Individual \_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_ .

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work/School (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Project proposal:** The research proposal will contain a title, background and significance of the project, overall goals and specific aims, methods to be employed, materials, equipment, personnel, schedule for completing the research plan, and a literature bibliography. The proposal should be sufficiently detailed to clearly present the plan. **The proposal will be typed. Attach this cover sheet to the proposal on submission.**

**Project budget:** A separate itemized project budget should be forwarded with your proposal.

Total amount requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Planned completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Agreement:** I (we) agree to make a full written report to the BOS describing in detail the results of the study or project. I (we) may also be required to present the results before a regular meeting of the Buffalo Ornithological Society (BOS). If for any reason this proposal cannot be carried out, I (we) will return all funds to the BOS.

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### For Students Only

**Faculty sponsor:** Please attach a reference letter from your faculty sponsor verifying your ability to carry out the proposed project and verifying his or her commitment to oversee your work

Faculty sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## GRANT APPLICATION FOR 2003 AWARD

### APPLICATION GUIDELINES

**Proposal Deadline: March 1, 2003**

The Buffalo Ornithological Society makes annual monetary grants in support of activities related to the society's purpose and interests.

#### **Grant Categories**

1. Ornithological studies and research projects
2. Projects such as bird habitat preservation and nesting projects
3. Funding for college undergraduate and graduate projects

#### **Eligibility**

Persons and organizations residing in the BOS study area dedicated to birds and their welfare including:

1. Ornithological societies, bird clubs or groups in which bird concerns are an integral part
2. Individuals, both BOS members and nonmembers
3. College students including those attending out of area schools (Students must have a faculty sponsor.)

#### **Grant amounts**

1. Applicants may request grants up to \$750.00
2. The actual amount awarded will be recommended by the Special Projects Fund Advisory Committee based on funds available, proposal quality and monetary requirements of the project.
3. Requests may be made for continued funding of previously approved projects

#### **Project completion**

1. When the proposed project has been completed, the grant recipient must make a written report to the Society.
2. The grant recipient may be required to present or participate in a program on the subject before the BOS membership at a regular meeting.

#### **Application materials**

Please use the form provided on the opposite side of this sheet as your application cover sheet. Carefully follow the instructions and **be sure to forward: (1) your cover sheet, (2) your detailed description of proposed activities and (3) your itemized budget.**

**Mail your completed application to:**

**Special Projects Fund  
c/o A. W. Vogt  
360 Center Street Unit #2  
East Aurora, NY 14052**





**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 1020 Humboldt Parkway  
 Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## December – January Calendar

**December 8: Buffalo Waterfront and Niagara River, Ontario.** Meet at 8:00 AM at Vermont and Busti. Leader: Mike Hamilton 881-6709.

**December 11: Annual Holiday Celebration:** Please bring a treat to share and enjoy an evening of birding friendship, 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science. Art Clark will lead a tour of the museum.

**December 15: Sunday. BOS Buffalo, NY Christmas Count.** Compiler: Bill Bogacki (674-5781).

**December 21: Saturday. Beaver Meadow Christmas Count.** Compiler: Bill Michalek (457-3228).

**December 27: Oak Orchard Christmas Count.** Compiler: Gail Seamans 585-937-5105.

**December 28: Saturday. Niagara Falls ON-NY Christmas Count.** Contact Willie D'Anna (731-4348; dannapotter@wzrd.com) for the NY side. Contact Kayo Roy (905-892-4433; kayoroy@niagara.com) for the Canadian side. All payments go to the compiler, Kayo Roy, 13 Kinsman Court, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada L0S 1E3.

**December 28: Saturday. Wilson-Lake Plains Christmas Count.** Compiler: Garner Light (772-5110) garnerlight@hotmail.com

**January 5: Sunday. Hamburg-East Aurora Christmas Count.** Compiler: Brendan Klick (839-1792)

**January 8: BOS Meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science. Dick Miga will discuss, *Understanding Birds Through the World of Sound*.

**January 12: Sunday. Waterfowl Count of the Federation of NYS Bird Clubs.** This is the target date, but any date between Saturday, Jan 11, and Sunday, Jan 19, inclusive is acceptable. However, the best count of shifting flocks is attained if everyone uses the target date, weather permitting. Bill Burch (773-3690).

*Note: All field trips are a full day in length and participants should pack a lunch. If you are interested in leading a field trip, call Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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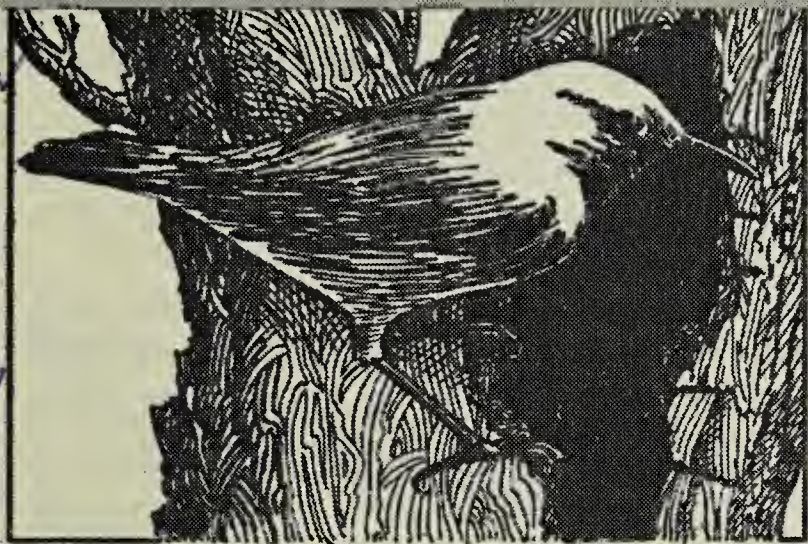
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# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 68, No. 11 November, 2002

### THE MONTH: October

by Bill Watson

On average, October weather was seasonable with 3.21 inches of precipitation, only 0.02 inches above normal, and an average temperature of 49.3°F, only 1.4°F below normal, making October the first month since May to have an average temperature below normal. October 1-13 was unusually warm with all the days, except the 8th, above normal, while October 14-31 was unusually cold with all days, except the 19th, below normal.

The first Parasitic Jaeger of the year "a dark morph immature" with a characteristic white wing flash caused by the light color at the base of the outer primaries under wing was studied by Bob Andrieu over Lake Erie at Athol Springs on October 5th. He also could see that "...the bill was quite small and the central tail feathers were pointed..." The winds were very strong October 4-7, with peak winds of 41 m.p.h. on October 5 being due west. Strong west winds are favorable for observing jaegers and rare gulls at Athol Springs and Woodlawn Beach State Park in October.

The first Piping Plover for 2002 is also the first ever in the month of October, although there are several September and two November records in our study area. Piping Plovers have decreased in abundance since the 1930's, with only seven records since 1965.

This Piping Plover was found by Blayne Farnan on October 9 at Sugar Loaf Point in Port Colborne, and was documented by Willie D'Anna on the 12th (see photograph). On the October 13 BOS Count Mike Hamilton also documented the

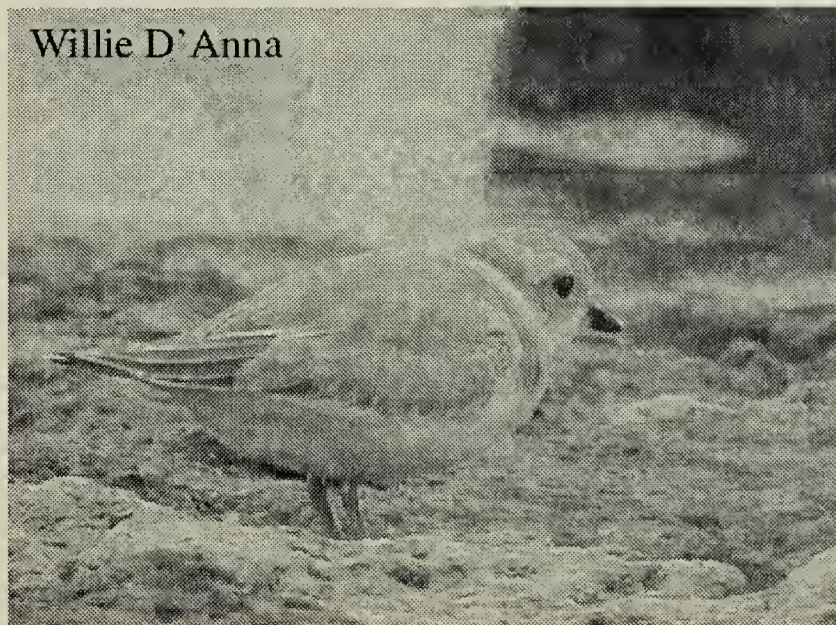
plover having a "very pale soft (ghostly) gray back, wings and head parts."

At the Somerset-Barker Wastewater Treatment Plant on October 20 Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter flushed two Hudsonian Godwits. In flight, these large shorebirds were recognized by their long (two times the width of the head) and slender "slightly recurved bills" which had a pale base and dark tip. The wings showed a black underwing with "contrasting white bar" at the "base of the flight feathers." This was the first, and probably only, record of Hudsonian Godwit for 2002.

The fourth new species for the year was a Barn Owl observed in Oakfield by Brendan Klick, Don Harris, and Gerry Rising while doing a big October on the 6th. They also had the first fall Brant in Yates and early Bufflehead and Northern Saw-whet Owl at Golden Hill State Park. Brendan and Don ended the day with a total of 118 species and a new New York State record for October.

In Wethersfield in Wyoming County, Dave Junkin

Willie D'Anna



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had a record year banding Northern Saw-whet Owls with an amazing total of 22 banded over five nights between October 19 and 27. One was a recaptured bird previously banded in 2000.

The first ever October Prairie Warbler was found in Ashford "just west of the railroad tracks that run through the Beaver Siding Swamp area" on October 26 by Mike DeSha. Mike wrote: "With respect to its face, I immediately noticed a conspicuous dark eye stripe and a yellow patch below the eye outlined by a dark semi-circle." The only later record is a winter record at Buckhorn Island State Park on December 6-14, 1998, by Peter Yoerg *et al.*

An unbanded Trumpeter Swan was found by Robert Sundell and

Blackpoll Warbler observed by Betsy Potter and Willie D'Anna on Cayuga Drive Extension in Wheatfield is only bettered by October 25, 1942 and November 9, 1995 records.

The Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) continues to produce record numbers of waterfowl with 420 Northern Shovelers on October 19. The 1,470 Ruddy Ducks, also on October 19, is only bettered by Kurt Fox's count of 1,569 on October 27, 2001 also at this location. Previously considered very rare, Eared Grebes first showed up at Batavia WWTP in August, 1996. During the last three Octobers they have been regular here with a group of four documented on October 6 and 19, 2002.

Since 1999, the Richardson's Canada Goose subspecies (*Branta canadensis hutchinsii*) has become increasingly regular. One has to wonder if this is from an increase in observer awareness and identification skills, or if the subspecies' migration route is shifting eastward. The 25 Richardson's Canada Geese documented by Peter Yoerg at Ring-neck Marsh at Iroquois NWR on October 27 is the third highest in the BOS study area.

The October high of 940 Double-crested Cormorants at the electrical towers near Buckhorn Island State Park is the lowest October high since 1999, perhaps an indication that Double-crested Cormorants have peaked in population at this location. The 137 Hooded Mergansers at Iroquois NWR is a very high count away from Chautauqua Lake. The two Pine Warblers at Goat Island State Park on the 21st, and the two Mute Swans (one in juvenile plumage) at Wilson on the 13th are also notable records.

The single Merlin at the UB south campus in September was joined by two or three others in October at this traditional winter communal night roosting location. See the discussion by Bob Wagner in the previous issue of *The Prothonotary*.

The following sources were used in this report: Beardslee, C.S., and H.D. Mitchell. 1965 *Birds of the Niagara Frontier region.*; Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, vol. 22.; National Weather Service. October 2002, Buffalo, New York.; Suggs, David. custodian of the B.O.S. Noteworthy Records Data Base 1964-1997 compiled by Dean DiTomaso *et al.*

Ranjit Laha on the October 13 Count at Bertie Bay on Chautauqua Lake. For several years now, reintroduced Trumpeter Swans and their offspring have not been banded in Ontario, because of their remote nesting locations. Trumpeter Swan breeding has also been reported from seven locations in New York State by NYS Breeding Bird Atlas workers.

Notable late records (other than the Prairie Warbler and Piping Plover discussed above) were Great Crested Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, and Blackpoll Warbler. Great Crested Flycatcher was reported on the 5th by Peter Yoerg. The Philadelphia Vireo documented by Mike Zebahazy along McDonald Road in Bertie Township on the October 13 Count is one of only ten October Count records. Later records are on October 14, 1950, October 19, 1958, and an October 25, 1979 tower-kill found by Art Clark in Colden. The



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	20 F	9	Somerset & Yates	D'Anna, Potter
Common Loon	6	3	Golden Hill SP	Klick, Harris
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	6	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Klick et al
"	19	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
D.-crested Cormorant	5	500	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	7	940	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
American Bittern	6	1	Iroquois NWR	T&S O'Donnell
"	27	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Great Egret	3	2	Tifft NP	Watson
"	6	1	Tonawanda WMA	T&S O'Donnell
"	6	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris, Rising
"	12	1	Chautauqua Lake	Moshers
Snow Goose	6	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson et al
"	6	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, Rising
"	20; 26	7; 7	Iroquois NWR	S&T O'Donnell
"	27	7	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
<u>Canada Goose (hutchinsii)</u>	27	25	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
Brant	<u>6F</u>	1	Yates	Klick
Mute Swan	6	1	Wilson	Klick, Harris, Rising
Tundra Swan	21F	2	East Aurora	Holmes
Wood Duck	11	136	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
Gadwall	15	37	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	19	20	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
"	22	34	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
"	26	35	Chautauqua Lake	Moshers
American Black Duck	19	15	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
Blue-winged Teal	5; 15L	25; 10	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	11	100	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
Northern Shoveler	5; 15	75; 55	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	6	130	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	19	420	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
"	22	70	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
"	26	45	Chautauqua Lake	Moshers
Northern Pintail	19	24	Iroquois NWR	Watson (BOS)
Green-winged Teal	3	52	Tifft NP	Watson
Canvasback	15	22	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Redhead	11	4	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
Ring-necked Duck	6	130	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	19	160	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
Greater Scaup	22	45	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
"	26	130	Somerset	D'Anna (BOS)
Lesser Scaup	19	40	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	26	70	Somerset	D'Anna (BOS)
White-winged Scoter	20	4	Olcott	Yoerg, Henderson
"	20	10	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Black Scoter	20F	7	Olcott	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
Long-tailed Duck	22	1	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
Bufflehead	6F	2	Golden Hill SP	Klick, Harris
"	19	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Hooded Merganser	26	137	Iroquois NWR	T&S O'Donnell
Ruddy Duck	6	541	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	15	191	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	19	1470	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
"	22	600	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
"	26	160	Chautauqua Lake	Moshers
Osprey	4	1	Hamburg	Morgante
"	4	1	Sturgeon Pt.	Rew
Bald Eagle	6	1	Hamburg	Andrle
"	27	2	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	1	Frewsburg	DeFrancisco
Rough-legged Hawk	12F	1	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	15	1	Frewsburg	DeFrancisco
"	26	2	Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
Merlin	3; 6; 11; 14	4; 4; 3; 4	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	5	1	Athol Springs	Andrle
"	6	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	6	1	Golden Hill SP	Klick, Harris
"	<u>21; 28; 30</u>	3; 3; 3	UB south campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	5	1	Athol Springs	Morgante, Andrle
"	6	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	22	1	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
"	28	2	Buffalo	Burch
Ring-necked Pheasant	30	2	Joseph Davis SP	Bill & Julie Horne
Virginia Rail	6L	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Sora	6L	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris, Rising
Common Moorhen	6	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
"	22L	1	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
American Coot	6	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Amer. Golden-Plover	6	1	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris, Rising
Semipalmated Plover	6	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, Rising
* <u>Piping Plover</u>	12	1	Port Colborne, Ont.	D'Anna
Greater Yellowlegs	27	6	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Lesser Yellowlegs	20	5	Athol Springs	Andrle
"	27	4	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Solitary Sandpiper	6	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, Rising
* <u>Hudsonian Godwit</u>	20	2	Somerset	D'Anna
Semipalm. Sandpiper	22L	12	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
Least Sandpiper	6L	5	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, Rising
Pectoral Sandpiper	6	25	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris, Rising
"	27	35	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Dunlin	19	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
"	20	4	Olcott	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	10	Batavia WWTP	Roberson
Stilt Sandpiper	6L	3	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, Rising



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Snipe	28	2	Farmersville	DeSha
American Woodcock	27	1	Pomfret	Mosher
*Parasitic Jaeger	5	1	Athol Springs	Andrle
Little Gull	12F	1	Port Colborne, Ont.	D'Anna
"	20	1	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg
"	20	1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
Lesser Black-b. Gull	6F	4	Goat Island	Klick, Harris
"	13	1	S. Cayuga, Ont.	Jerry & Nina Chapple
"	30	3	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
Forster's Tern	12F	1	Port Colborne, Ont.	D'Anna
*Barn Owl	6	1	Oakfield	Klick, Harris, Rising
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	18 - 27	22 total	Wethersfield	Junkin
"	<u>6</u>	1	Golden Hill SP	Klick
Common Nighthawk	4	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	6L	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Chimney Swift	6	3	Yates	Klick, Harris, Rising
"	6	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, Rising
"	9L	8	Jamestown	Berry
Red-headed Wdpr.	4	1	Sturgeon Pt.	Rew
"	6	1	Fort Niagara SP	Klick, Harris
Eastern Wood-Pewee	5	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	11	1	Tifft NP	Andrle
Gr. Cr. Flycatcher	<u>5L</u>	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Philadelphia Vireo	6	1	Tifft NP	Andrle et al
Common Raven	15	1	Ward	Brooks
"	28	1	Alfred	Brooks
N. Rough-w. Swallow	6	14	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris, Rising
"	27; 30	130; 40	Niagara Falls	D'Anna
Barn Swallow	6	9	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	19L	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson (BOS)
Carolina Wren	4 - 29	3 max	WNY & Ont.	12 records
House Wren	7	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Marsh Wren	6	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Golden-cr. Kinglet	3	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	18	1	Goat Island	Roberson
Eastern Bluebird	30	12	Joseph Davis SP	Bill & Julie Horne
Gray-cheeked Thrush	3	3	Lancaster	Morgante
"	5	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	6L	1	Golden Hill SP	Klick, Harris
"	6L	1	Olcott	Klick, Harris
Swainson's Thrush	3	10	Lancaster	Morgante
"	5	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	6	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
American Pipit	6	5	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Tennessee Warbler	12	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Orange-cr. Warbler	5	2	Allegany SP	DeSha
"	10	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Nashville Warbler	6	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Klick, Harris
"	17L	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Magnolia Warbler	3	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Cape May Warbler	6	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	6	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	15	2	Goat Island	Roberson



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	18L	1	Wheatfield	Potter, D'Anna
Pine Warbler	<u>21L</u>	2	Goat Island	Roberson
Prairie Warbler	<u>26L</u>	1	Ashford	DeSha
Palm Warbler	3	4	Tifft NP	Watson
Blackpoll Warbler	17	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	19; <u>22L</u>	1; 1	Wheatfield	D'Anna, Potter
Eastern Towhee	17; 23	1; 1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Vesper Sparrow	20	1	Cambria	Yoerg, Henderson
Savannah Sparrow	6	3	Yates	Klick, Harris, Rising
Fox Sparrow	24	5	Tonawanda	Watson
"	26	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	27	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	2	Watts Flats WMA	Berry
Lincoln's Sparrow	10	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	12	2	East Aurora	Holmes
White-cr. Sparrow	4 - 27	5 max	Throughout WNY	7 records
Lapland Longspur	20F	1	Cambria	D'Anna, Potter
"	26	12	Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
Snow Bunting	27F	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Rusty Blackbird	5; 13	25; 12	Watts Flats WMA	Berry
"	11	60	Iroquois NWR	Roberson

Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded: 274

Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue: 4

Total for the year 2002: 278

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.

**Erratum in Noteworthy Records Volume 68, Number 10: Eastern Kingbird add "L" to record on the 8th**

## BOS Field Trip to Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant and Iroquois NWR

by Bill Watson

October 19, 2002, was a dark, wet, and gloomy day. Great weather for ducks and grebes! But, not for birders, as only four people showed up for this trip.

The Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant ponds seldom disappoint birders looking for waterfowl, this day proved no exception to the rule. We had about 25 American Black Ducks, 80 American Wigeon, 30 Green-winged Teal, 8 Northern Pintails, 420 Northern Shovelers, 160 Ring-necked Ducks, a Canvasback, 3 Common Mergansers, 20 Gadwall, 40 Lesser Scaup, 10 Greater Scaup, and an impressive 1469 Ruddy Ducks. A highlight was an Eared Grebe observed early in the day and later, a group of three. The latter group

were observed at a distance of only 40 yards. We also had excellent looks at a Dunlin, and may have seen some of the last Tree Swallows and Barn Swallow of the year.

At Stafford Pond at the Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area, we added Pied-billed Grebe.

At Ring-neck Marsh on Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge we found 24 Northern Pintails, 16 Green-winged Teal, 40 American Wigeon, 15 Northern Shovelers, 18 Gadwall, and a very large number of Canada Geese. At Center Marsh: 5 Killdeer and 4 Pectoral Sandpipers. At School House Marsh: 20 Rusty Blackbirds, White-throated Sparrows, and a Greater Yellow-legs.



## Peregrine Falcon Nesting Report for the 2002 Season

*by Bill Burch*

Each of the two active pairs of peregrines in the nearby area had a successful breeding season. The Hotel Statler nest box in Buffalo was occupied for the fourth year by the pair which took over the box in 1999. They fledged three young. The Niagara Falls pair, now in their fifth year there, also fledged three from their nest on Goat Island.

The big news of this season is that, after a year of searching, the identity of our Statler female finally has been determined. The search began after the one-way window was installed last year, permitting for the first time a reading in June, 2001 of her leg band as well as good photographs. It appears that the reading of a leg band is more an arcane activity than it appears. On our female, when the right leg is positioned horizontally with her foot to the right, the black band reads XE in white letters. Plain enough. However, bands are read with the leg vertical, with the first letter at the top. In our contact with the Bird Banding Laboratory in Laurel, MD, the band was described as "vertical X over horizontal E", a mistake since the E was not horizontal, but rather tipped on its face. A band described this way was traced to an Alaskan birder, who put it on a peregrine long ago, in 1990. A photo then was sent to Mary Gustafson of the Banding Lab. Her suspicion, that the band had been put on upside down, proved correct, and the bird was traced. The upshot of this is that the Lab is writing a brochure on how to read bands, and is using my photo as an illustration. Gustafson described our band as, "tipped E over tipped X on upside down, right?"

Our female was banded June 17, 1998 as one of three nestlings, age ~28 days. The nest was on sandstone cliffs near Hillsborough, New Brunswick, on the Petitcodiac River, an upper part of the Bay of Fundy. This is 700 miles east of Buffalo. The banding was directed by Diane Amirault of the Canadian Wildlife Service, who agreed that the band was upside down.

It is remarkable that our Hillsborough female had her first nesting at the tender age of 10 months. Two to three years is more usual for the first nesting. I did assist in the hacking in 1987 of an aggressive female (appropriately named Nellie McClung) that, at the age of 12 months, established a nest in downtown Toledo, Ohio, and was a big producer until she died at the age of 10 years.

This year the female, now 3 years-11 months of age, began egg-laying on April 5. Hatching began May 11,

and fledging began June 17. Four eggs hatched, but only three nestlings survived; all were females. The male parent had come here in 1999 with the female parent. We cannot identify him since he lacks an easy-to-read two-character band, although he does have a 9-digit USFWS band, as does the female.

This year the banding of the three-week-old chicks was done on the first floor of the Statler in the well-lighted former US Airways office. This was a welcome change from the dark elevator room on the 19th floor used previously. Banding was done by Mark Kandel and Mike Allen of the Department of Environmental Conservation, aided by Marcel Gahbauer of the Canadian Peregrine Foundation. Present were reporters, a video technician and several spectators. While the chicks were being removed from the nest box, the angry peregrine female buzzed the nest and struck Kandel on the hand. Then she sat on the edge of the box, calling loudly while the male flew past the entrance.

The first young fledged a bit prematurely, on June 17, and was found on Delaware Avenue near the Statler. It was picked up and taken to the roof, where it could complete its practicing. The other two fledged two or three days later without incident.

In other years it has been possible to account for all of the juveniles during their first week after fledging. This year, although three fledged, I was able to see only two of them at one time during three observations (June 20, 24 and July 9), on each occasion in the company of one or two parents; however, young peregrines move about and the third one may simply have been away.

Although the juveniles depart in the autumn, often wintering in Central America, the adults stay in Buffalo. Both were seen October 28 at the nest box. On December 6 the male perched for two hours on a high ledge on the NW corner of the Liberty Building, a favored spot for the peregrines. We expect them back in 2003, and we hope the website prepared by Tony Wagner of the Audubon Society will again be active. Likewise, the two video monitors, made possible by BOS, will be in action.

The pair nesting at Goat Island fledged three young in 2002. Tony Wagner saw the parents and three juveniles at Terrapin Point on June 29. The Canadians have identified the adults as the pair that first had a successful nesting on the Canadian side of the gorge in 1998, and on the Goat Island side thereafter. The nest was high on the cliff about one-third of the way from the Cave-of-the-Winds tunnel to Terrapin Point, but not visible from the point.



# Report of the 67th Annual B.O.S. October Bird Count

Date: October 13, 2002

Compiler: Mike Hamilton

Weather Synopsis: Terry Yonker

## Weather Synopsis

On the morning of the count a low pressure area was located over James Bay trailing a north-south cold front through Southern Ontario to the Gulf. The cold front advanced through the count area from west to east during the morning, passing Buffalo-Niagara International Airport just before 9 am. A warm muggy predawn was followed by light rain, drizzle, a wind shift, falling temperatures and sharply lowered dewpoints (humidity). Sunshine varied throughout the count area but cloudy skies generally gave way to partly cloudy skies during the afternoon.

### Buffalo-Niagara International Airport Sunrise: 7:26 AM      Sunset: 6:37 PM

Time:	Weather:	Temp:	Dew Pt.:	Pressure:	Dir/Wind:	Remarks:
Midnight		61	59	30.03	S6	
3:00 am		61	57	29.98	S10	
6:00 am	Light Rain	60	57	29.95	S9	
9:00 am	Light Drizzle	57	53	30.04	W10	Cold Front Passage
noon		54	49	30.10	W10	
3:00 pm		57	39	30.12	W21	
6:00 pm						No data
9:00 pm		46	32	30.27	WNW16	
Midnight						No data

**Compilation:** The following is a list of species recorded on the count together with the number of individuals tabulated. Bold face names indicate species for which acceptable written verifications were received. **F** represents first and **L** last dates for the fall migration, \* first date for the year. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers are given in parentheses ( ).

L O O N S – D U C K S			
Common Loon	4 (1,5,11)	Northern Shoveler	387
Pied-billed Grebe	42	Northern Pintail	29
Horned Grebe	3 (16,13)	Green-winged Teal	401
Double-crested Cormorant	811	unspecified teal	2 (10)
Great Blue Heron	119	Canvasback	7 (7,13)
Great Egret	3 (13)	Redhead	16
Green Heron	2 (19,28)	Ring-necked Duck	149
Black-crowned Night-Heron	13	Greater Scaup	572
Turkey Vulture	259	Lesser Scaup	124
Snow Goose	7 (5,17)	unspecified scaup	130 (2)
Canada Goose	19,565	Surf Scoter	56 (8)
Mute Swan (adults)	17 (3,8)	White-winged Scoter	120 (3,5)
<b>Trumpeter Swan</b> (origin unknown)	1 (21)	Long-tailed Duck	<b>F</b> 2 (8,9)
Tundra Swan	12 (7)	Bufflehead	7 (8,13)
Wood Duck	414	Common Goldeneye	2 (11)
Gadwall	40	Hooded Merganser	18
American Wigeon	149	Common Merganser	89
American Black Duck	96	Red-breasted Merganser	117
Mallard	4,118	Ruddy Duck	1,271
Black/Mallard hybrid	1 (12)	unspecified waterfowl	264
Blue-winged Teal	115 (10,13)		

O S P R E Y S - C O O T S			
Osprey	3 (7,24,27)	Sharp-shinned Hawk	22
Bald Eagle	7 (24,25)	Cooper's Hawk	16
Northern Harrier	30	unspecified accipiters	1 (13)



Red-shouldered Hawk	9	Peregrine Falcon	3 (7,8)
Broad-winged Hawk	5 (10,14)	Ring-necked Pheasant	15
Red-tailed Hawk	169	Ruffed Grouse	8
Rough-legged Hawk	2 (4)	Wild Turkey	263
American Kestrel	49	Common Moorhen	2 (13)
Merlin	6 (8,10,11)	American Coot	104

#### PLOVERS – TERNS

Black-bellied Plover	11 (7)	Pectoral Sandpiper	6 (4,8,12)
American Golden-Plover	2 (4,19)	Dunlin	F 17
Semipalmated Plover	7	Common Snipe	2 (13)
<b>Piping Plover</b>	1 (7)	American Woodcock	2 (13,19)
Killdeer	352	unspecified shorebirds	3 (10)
Greater Yellowlegs	24	Little Gull	1 (11)
Lesser Yellowlegs	33	Bonaparte's Gull	979
Solitary Sandpiper	4 (4,7)	Ring-billed Gull	14,471
Spotted Sandpiper	5	Herring Gull	845
Sanderling	23 (6,7,20)	Lesser Black-backed Gull	1 (6)
Semipalmated Sandpiper	3 (11)	Great Black-backed Gull	60
Least Sandpiper	1 (7)	Common Tern	54 (9,11)
White-rumped Sandpiper	1 (11)		

#### DOVES – SWALLOWS

Rock Dove	2,464	Pileated Woodpecker	9
Mourning Dove	2,194	Eastern Wood-Pewee	L 3 (7,24)
Eastern Screech-Owl	17	Eastern Phoebe	38
Great Horned Owl	7	Blue-headed Vireo	10 (10,24,28)
Barred Owl	5 (11,12,24)	<b>Philadelphia Vireo</b>	L 1 (8)
<b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b>	6 (15)	Red-eyed Vireo	4 (11,22)
Chimney Swift	20 (11,23)	Blue Jay	1,325
Belted Kingfisher	35	American Crow	3,185
Red-bellied Woodpecker	61	Common Raven	14 (24,28)
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	13	Horned Lark	25
Downy Woodpecker	160	Tree Swallow	15 (2,11,17)
Hairy Woodpecker	44	N. Rough-winged Swallow	14 (2)
Northern Flicker	132	Barn Swallow	2 (4)

#### TITS - WAXWINGS

Black-capped Chickadee	1,150	Eastern Bluebird	306
Tufted Titmouse	59	Gray-cheeked Thrush	L 3 (11)
Red-breasted Nuthatch	23	Swainson's Thrush	L 4 (9,11,12)
White-breasted Nuthatch	150	Hermit Thrush	25
Brown Creeper	24	Wood Thrush	2 (11,18)
Carolina Wren	14	American Robin	2,008
House Wren	5 (1,7,10)	Gray Catbird	31
Winter Wren	12	Northern Mockingbird	7
Marsh Wren	3 (7,11)	European Starling	35,934
Golden-crowned Kinglet	307	American Pipit	129
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	153	Cedar Waxwing	365

#### WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler	2 (24)	Black-throated Green Warbler	2 (11,16)
Nashville Warbler	6	Blackburnian Warbler	4 (9)
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1 (9)	Palm Warbler	8
Magnolia Warbler	1 (20)	Blackpoll Warbler	2 (9,12)
Cape May Warbler	1 (9)	American Redstart	4 (13)
Black-throated Blue Warbler	4 (11,12)	Common Yellowthroat	8 (5,11,24)
Yellow-rumped Warbler	754		



# TOWHEES – HOUSE SPARROWS

Eastern Towhee	19	unspecified sparrows	20 (13)
American Tree Sparrow	47	Northern Cardinal	258
Chipping Sparrow	380	Red-winged Blackbird	13,282
Field Sparrow	61	Eastern Meadowlark	22
Vesper Sparrow	7 (15,19,27)	Rusty Blackbird	868
Savannah Sparrow	15	Common Grackle	6,017
Fox Sparrow	1 (3)	Brown-headed Cowbird	732
Song Sparrow	626	unspecified blackbirds	100 (10)
Lincoln's Sparrow	<b>L</b> 11	Purple Finch	34 (19,28)
Swamp Sparrow	92	House Finch	536
White-throated Sparrow	1,068	Pine Siskin	8 (7,13,28)
White-crowned Sparrow	204	American Goldfinch	953
Dark-eyed Junco	435	House Sparrow	1,572

**Summary Information** – Total Species Observed ..... **163**  
Total Individual Birds Observed ... **125,858**

**Comparisons** – Associated charts, available from Michael Hamilton, give comparative summary information for the most recent decade, for the full 67 counts and decade by decade since 1935. A chart listing totals for each species per section for 2002 is also available. In addition the following notes are added:

**NOTES: Highest count since 1935 (x the average):** Northern Shoveller, 387 (12.1 x); Green-winged Teal, 401 (4.7 x); Ruddy Duck, 1271 (13.2 x); Bald Eagle, 7 (7 x); Merlin, 6 (6 x); Peregrine Falcon, 3 (16 x); N. Saw-whet Owl, 6 (50 x); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 61 (6.8 x).

**Highest count in past decade (x the average):** Northern Shoveler, 387 (2.2 x); Green-winged Teal, 401 (1.8 x); Canvasback, 7 (7 x); Surf Scoter, 56 (7 x); Red-breasted Merganser, 117 (2.5 x); Ruddy Duck, 1271 (3.3 x); Bald Eagle, 7 (1.8 x); Red-shouldered Hawk, 9 (1.8 x); Broad-winged Hawk, 5 (2.5 x); Merlin, 6 (6 x); Peregrine Falcon, 3 (3 x); Semipalmated Plover, 7 (2.3 x); Solitary Sandpiper, 4 (4 x); E. Screech-Owl, 17 (2.4 x); N. Saw-whet Owl, 6 (6 x); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 61 (1.8 x); Gray-cheeked Thrush, 3 (1.5 x); Blackburnian Warbler, 4 (4 x); Lincoln's Sparrow, 11 (2.2 x).

**Near lowest count since 1935 (% of the average):** Horned Grebe, 3 (4%) – lowest was 2 in 2001

**Lowest count in past decade (% of the average):** Northern Pintail, 29 (51%); American Kestrel, 49 (40%); Ruffed Grouse, 8 (35%); Common Snipe, 2 (11%); Great Black-backed Gull, 60 (31%); American Crow, 3185 (75%); Horned Lark, 25 (38%); Red-breasted Nuthatch, 23 (30%); N. Mockingbird, 7 (41%); Cedar Waxwing, 365 (47%); Magnolia Warbler, 1 (20%); E. Meadowlark, 22 (25%); Purple Finch, 34 (47%); **LOONS & GREBES, INDIVIDUALS, 49 (27%); JAYS, CROWS & RAVENS, INDIVIDUALS, 4524 (79%).**

**First count record:** Piping Plover, 1

**Second count record:** Trumpeter Swan (origin unknown), 1 – first record was last year

**Third count record:** Lesser Black-backed Gull, 1 – seen previously in '98 & '99; N. Saw-whet Owl, 6 – seen previously in '45 & '73

**First decade record:** Piping Plover, 1; N. Saw-whet Owl, 6

**Second decade record:** Trumpeter Swan (origin unknown), 1 – first record was last year

**Third decade record:** Lesser Black-backed Gull, 1 – seen previously in '98 & '99

**Sections and Observers:** Names of section compilers are in boldface.

1. Fontheill, ON: David Cooper, **Lynne Landon**, Terry Yonker
2. Thorold, ON: Lynne Landon, Susan M. O'Donnell, **Thomas M. O'Donnell**, Terry Yonker
3. Wilson, NY: **Willie D'Anna**, Betsy Potter
4. Middleport, NY: Marie Johnson, Alice McKale, Paul Schnell, Gail Testa, **Bill Watson**
5. Oak Orchard, NY: Don Brasure, Bill Burch, Dick Christensen, Peggy Christensen, Cathy Harper, Tom Harper, Morgan Jones, **Brendan Klick**, Robert Lipp
6. Port Maitland, ON: **Jerry Chapple**, Nina Chapple
7. Lowbanks, ON: Barbara Byron, Richard Byron, Edward Fuchs, **Mike Hamilton**, Jack Mansfield, Sonja Mansfield
8. Fort Erie, ON: Doug Happ, Brian Lewandowski, **Mike Zebehazy**
9. Grand Island, NY: Pat Bogan, Mandy Dragoo, Mike Galas, Sylvia Galas, Ron Hacker, Sue Hacker, Tammy Kelly, Debra Milleville, Susan M. O'Donnell, Thomas M. O'Donnell, **Gerry Rising**, Joe Stein



10. Akron, NY: Edward Crohn, Alyssa Deleon, Robert Deleon, **Donald Roberson**, Mary Ann Stegmeier, John Welte, Martha Welte
11. Buffalo, NY: Kristen Buechi, Marjorie Harwitz, Mitchell Harwitz, **Alec Humann**, Chuck Rosenburg, Peter Yoerg
12. Lancaster, NY: Ann Bauer, Marion Bee, Kurt Fox, Paul Fuhrmann, Linda Holmes, **Mike Morgante**, Marlene Phillips, Ruth Phillips Jr., Donna Wieand
13. Batavia, NY: Douglas Beattie, Elaine Dart, Kurt Fox, Tad Gerace, Charles Graney, Eileen Hull, Robert Hull, Aron Kehlenbeck, Zeke Kehlenbeck, Jane Mason, Max Mason, Dolores Seamans, **Gail Seamans**, Donald Thureau
14. Hamburg, NY: Ken Brandes, Tim Goff, Erma Kern, Glenna Leous, Mark Leous, **Barbara Walker**, Margaret Wooley
15. Java, NY: **Bill Bogacki**, David Junkin, Ed Ratajczak
16. Angola, NY: Patricia Andrle, Robert Andrle, Audrey Horbett, **Frances Rew**, Joseph Thill
17. Cattaraugus, NY: John Filor, Nicholas Sly, **Robert Wagner**
18. Delavan, NY: **Bruce Chilton**, Jim Landau, Karen Landau
19. Fillmore, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Ron Andrews, Leora Arnold, Faye Clancy, Barbara Cronk, Dora Lilly, Joan MacEwan, Roger Nicholson, Sean Phelan, Michael Raybuck, Theresa Rork, Linda Roth, Lois Short, Bill Smith, **Elaine Smith**, , Marion Smith, Max Smith, James Talbott, Ann Voss, Jay Wilson, Mrs. Jay Wilson, Jean Wilson, **Larry Wilson**, Richard Wilson
20. Dunkirk, NY: Lake Erie Bird Club: Chris Budniewski, Ray Budniewski, Sylvia Clark, **Paul Farver**, Joanne Goetz, Tom Goetz, Joe Gula, Richard Miga, Terry Mahoney, Terry Mosher, Lucille Neveau, Bob Peterson, Beverly Ruska, John Ruska, Audrey Schafer, Doris Welch, Tom Welch
21. Cherry Creek, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jessie Nelson, Joanne Nelson, **Bob Sundell**
22. Sherman, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Jim Berry, Ranjit Laha, **Bob Sundell**
23. Frewsburg, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jean Pigman, **Bob Sundell**
24. Salamanca, NY and Allegany State Park: Cattaraugus County Bird Club: **Tim Baird**, Barbara Henderson, Peter Yoerg
25. Allegany, NY: Cattaraugus County Bird Club: **Tim Baird**, James VanScoy, Regina VanScoy
26. Cuba, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: **Doris Burton**, Mary Jordan, Francis Hunt, Ann Scott, Bob Smalley, Bruce Smalley
27. Bolivar, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: **Doris Burton**, Norman Ives, Helen Link
28. Alfred, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Mallery Adams, Mary Adams, Russell Allen, Dan Babcock, Ellen Baker, Carol Behn, Warren Bouck, Don Brink, Lorna Brink, Betsy Brooks, Debbie Bucholz, **Doris Burton**, Mary Lou Cartledge, Carla Coch, **Diane Converso**, Jim Copenheaver, Paulette Copenheaver, Audrey Dunham, Ann Eisenhardt, Peter Finlay, Terry Finlay, John Gradoni, Geri Hills, Ralph Hills, Matt Hotchkiss, Sandra Hotchkiss, Elsie Kent, Clarence Klingensmith, Barry Lash, Martha Lash, Kathleen MacDonald, Ken McClure, Marion McClure, Mary Ormsby, Sean Phelan, Bob Pipal, Esther Pitzrick, Michael Pitzrick, Vivian Pitzrick, Dan Ramsey, Evelyn Ramsey, Nicole Ramsey, Mary Shields, Peter Shields, Terah Soule, Mary Lu Wells, **Suzanne Wood**

**Total Number of Observers: 217**





**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 1020 Humboldt Parkway  
 Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## December 15 – February Calendar

**December 15: Sunday. BOS Buffalo, NY Christmas Bird Count (CBC).**

Compiler: Bill Bogacki (716-674-5781).

**December 21: Saturday. Beaver Meadow CBC.** Compiler: Bill Michalek (716-457-3228).

**December 27: Oak Orchard CBC.** Compiler: Gail Seamans (585-937-5105)

**December 28: Saturday. Niagara Falls ON-NY CBC.** Willie D'Anna (731-4348; dannapotter@wzrd.com) or compiler Kayo Roy (905-892-4433; kayoroy@niagara.com). All payments go to the compiler, Kayo Roy, 13 Kinsman Court, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada L0S 1E3.

**December 28: Saturday. Wilson-Lake Plains CBC.** Compiler: Garner Light (772-5110) garnerlight@hotmail.com

**January 5: Sunday. Hamburg-East Aurora CBC.** Compiler: Brendan Klick (839-1792)

**January 5: Sunday. Port Colborne CBC.** Meet at McDonald's in Port Colborne, corner of Hwys 3 and 58 at 8 am. Compiler: Drew Campbell (drew.campbell@gm.com or 1-800-539-2329)

**January 8: BOS Meeting.** 7:30 PM at Buffalo Museum of Science. Dick Miga will discuss, *Understanding Birds Through the World of Sound*.

**January 12: Sunday. Waterfowl Count of the Federation of NYS Bird Clubs.** This is the target date, but any date between Jan 11-19 inclusive is acceptable. The best count of shifting flocks is attained if everyone uses the target date, weather permitting. Bill Burch (716-773-3690).

**February 23: Sunday. Niagara Co., New York Owl Trip.** Meet at 1 PM at Toys R'Us entrance at Summit Park Mall on Williams Road, south of Niagara Falls Blvd., in the Town of Wheatfield. Leader: Chuck Rosenberg (716-434-9403, rosestod@localnet.com)

*Note: All field trips are a full day in length and participants should pack a lunch. If you are interested in leading a field trip, call Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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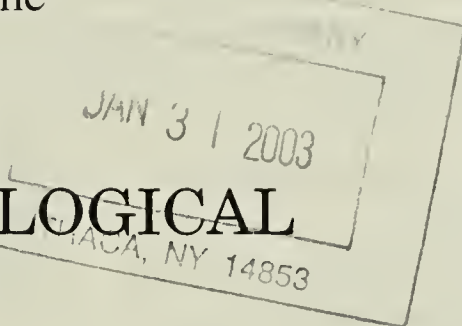


# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Volume 68, No. 12 December, 2002

### THE MONTH: November

by Gerry Rising

Unlike the last several years, November 2002 was near normal for this region. On average a little colder: down a degree; a third inch less precipitation; and two inches less snow. The 8.9 inches total snowfall we did have contrasts, for example, with the records of the past four years: in 2000-2001 over 45 inches, in the other three virtually none. This November's snow was distributed over nine days beginning on the first and the most (at the Buffalo airport) fell on the 27th, 2.5 inches. On that same day, however, 6 inches fell in areas of Niagara County.

It was an especially gloomy month, only 21% of possible sunshine vs. the average 29%. Lake Erie temperature was 42 °F at month's end, 2 degrees below average. Winds were moderate.

The biggest birding news in November was, of course, the appearance of the Cave Swallow at Goat Island where it consorted with a flock of very late rough-wings and one or two trees (swallows, that is,

each of which also required verification reports). Many observers saw the bird and, most important, with the combined wonders of digital and telescopic photography, Willie D'Anna has provided splendid evidence of this startling appearance. How and why this species, whose normal range extends up from Mexico into southern Texas, got here is certainly an unan-

swerable question. First Cave Swallow reports came a few days earlier from the north shore of Lake Erie, just as they did a year or two ago when those birds bypassed us to be reported in Rochester. The earlier appearance west of our region in Ontario this fall of a Tropical Kingbird and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher suggest the possibility of an odd meteorological event — or a truckload of rare birds brought north and released as a joke.

### Winter Saturdays at the Main St. Beach

Surrounded by ice, the waterfowl honk and holler;  
they wheel and sleep and feed.

My harbor ritual: flocking with the gulls,  
geese, and grebes, the scaup, the swans, and scoters,  
coots, and canvasbacks, the mallards, and mergansers,  
redheads, ring-necks, and ruddies, the buffleheads, and blacks,  
the pintails. Stunned speechless, I scan  
the bestial avian mass unencumbered  
by hiring practices, alarm clocks, call-waiting, and endless e-mail.

I don't believe the birds plan their dinners.

Ah no, they dive and dunk. They are not alcoholic;  
they never step on scales; they don't gamble with money,  
and they never analyze sex. As they bob on the rise and fall of the current,  
they don't consider it a weakness to sleep during the day  
or interrupt another's overbearing speech. I can attest  
that they don't bother with grammar and never try to rhyme their o's.

The glare from their white world strains  
my aging eyes, but I forget my life when I am  
with them; I see uncommon colors; my feet begin to float,  
and a guttural song rises from my breast.

Eventually a flurry of snowflakes pelts  
my purple coat, fogs my lenses; I jump,  
startled by a copper-colored carp leaping  
out of the inky flow. The splash fans  
and falls. I walk to the car and drive home,  
honking every chance I get.

Carolyn Kieber Grady teaches in the English department at Fredonia State College. She is a longstanding member of Penelope, a Fredonia area writers group. This poem was first published in the Buffalo News, 2002.

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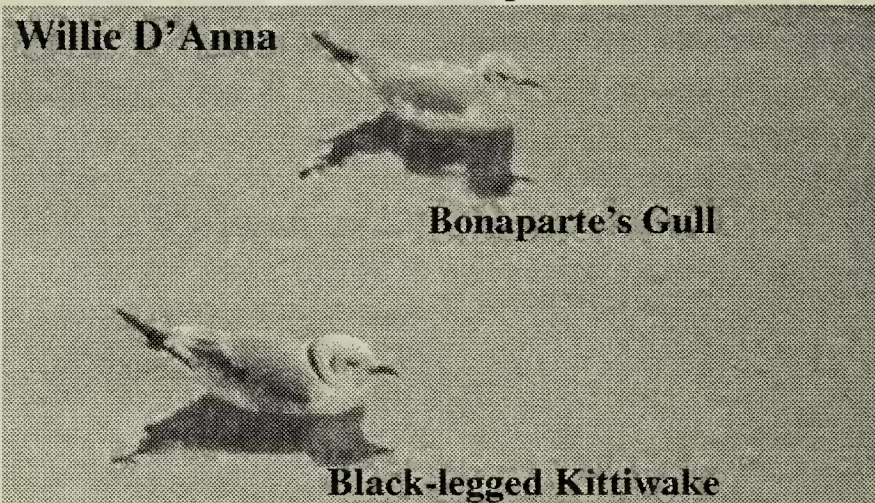
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Before continuing, I must note the wonderful assistance now provided to writers of this column by the "Seasonal Checklist to the Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region" developed by Dave Suggs and his committee. Much of what follows is based at least in part on that excellent publication. Every local birder should have a copy (along with the long-standing Verification Date Guide) for reference.

But every birding publication becomes dated almost as soon as it is issued. The Cave Swallow will change both guides and another species that will soon demand further upgrading is the Eared Grebe that is now appearing in small but significant numbers regularly on the Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant

ing the river when a large dark bird caught my eye as it was flying downstream, in the middle of the river but perhaps slightly farther away than dead centre (thus it was clearly in New York). My first thought was that it was a Common Loon, due to its large size and wingbeat. But then I realized it was a cormorant, with an obvious white belly extending down to at least the base of the legs. The bird was clearly large and bulky compared to Double-crested Cormorant." He also noted among other field marks the large and thick head and the heavy bill. The bird turned west when it reached Lake Ontario. Another observer, Brian Ahara (conveyed by Kayo Roy), later saw almost certainly the same bird as it continued past Port Weller.

**Willie D'Anna**



**Bonaparte's Gull**

**Black-legged Kittiwake**

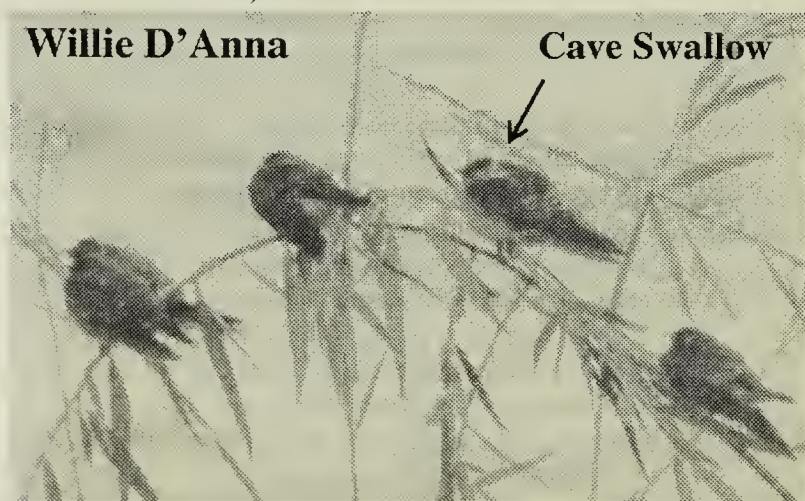
The value of carefully preparing a verification report is evident in Dominic Sherony's discussion of 2 female Barrow's Goldeneyes just above Horseshoe Falls. Like so many female ducks, this is a tough call and Sherony carefully researched the literature to check out the features he noted.

And many of the verification reports have another feature: they are simply fun to read. Peter Yoerg now refers to that line of trees on the UB South Campus as "Merlin-ville" (5 birds there this November) and here are Mike Morgante's comments about the Sandhill Crane he saw flying over the Batavia Wastewater Treatment lagoons: "The crane flew with the ducks around the pond several times and remained in the air when the ducks landed [but] the Canada geese resting on the berm fled when the crane approached." And the delightful description of the Town of Portland Yellowthroated Warbler reported by English professor Terry Mosher from which this is selected: "Roughly the size of the Black-capped Chickadees which it accompanied to the feeder but less rotund,... this elegant warbler showed a dark, slender, sharply pointed bill noticeably longer than those of most other Dendroicans and stouter at the base." Bob Sundell and Jim Berry also reported this bird and accompanied their report with an excellent photograph.

lagoons. (It may be that the respective committees should report such minor modifications in The Prothonotary between editions so we can all keep our guides up to the minute.)

**Willie D'Anna**

**Cave Swallow**



Now too both guides will be affected by our second BOS study area Great Cormorant. Here are excerpts from Alan Wormington's write-up about his observations at Niagara-on-the-Lake: "I was casually watch-



I must note here my lack of enthusiasm for the now-regular reports of the *hutchinsii* subspecies of Canada Goose. I have written a separate note below.

## On Races of the Canada Goose

by Gerry Rising

As I noted in my *Month* commentary, I am concerned about the interest being expressed by local observers in the smaller Canada Geese occurring here. These are, according to them, *Branta canadensis hutchinsii*, a subspecies termed the Hutchins Goose in Bent's *Life Histories of North American Waterfowl*. (Elsewhere it is named Hutchins', Hutchins's or even Richardson's Goose.) I certainly do not argue with this identification, but I wince each time I see these birds reported. In this article I explain why.

But first an aside: I have no problem with our differentiating the Horned Lark and Palm Warbler subspecies or the various hybrid forms of the Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers. There are, I believe, good arguments for these identifications. However, with game birds and in particular Canada Geese, I urge caution in raising this issue of races.

Now to my point: Surely most of us would agree that we have today a few too many Canada Geese soiling our ball fields and corporate lawns, ruining our golf course greens and driving other species out of our marshes. What we should understand is that interest in the various forms of Canada Geese contributes to this overpopulation.

How many birders realize that goose-hunting seasons have been cut back because of concern for another so-called race of Canada Goose, *B. c. maxima*, a subspecies that is not even recognized by taxonomists of the American Ornithologists' Union?

These larger geese were popularized by Harold C. Hansen's *The Giant Canada Goose* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965, rev. 1997). In this book, which has been termed by one wildlife manager "one of the finest waterfowl monographs ever written," Hansen makes the case for protecting these big geese — hunters' favorites for obvious reasons — through season restrictions: "Adjustment of the opening and closing dates of the hunting season," he says, "is one of the principal means of regulating the size and selectivity of waterfowl kills. It should, therefore,...be pointed out that because the fall migration movements of the giant Canadas are fully a month behind the migration of the race *interior*, late hunting seasons will tend to jeopardize stocks of *maxima*...."

And so, at least partly influenced by Hansen, goose seasons have been reduced. As my Ohio colleague, Bill Whan, says: "It is an article of belief among wildlife officials that their precious *maximae* 'migrate' a month later than other forms. Thus here in Ohio we have an 'early goose season' in September (coinciding with the teal season pretty much), which is ballyhooed as a way to control nuisance flocks of resident geese without imperiling any of the truly wild and migratory Canadas, which allegedly come through beginning in mid-October." But even this goes wrong. Bill continues: "This year the truly migrant race *interior* - with orange collars - (universally recognized as genuinely in trouble) came through a bit 'earlier' than usual...to be greeted by a hail of shot."

Hansen fought hard to have the A.O.U. recognize his beloved giants, but Alexander Wetmore and his taxonomic colleagues would have no part of his arguments. The only mention of the *maxima* subspecies in any of the seven *A.O.U. Checklists* is in the *5th* (1957). There it is listed as probably extinct. More important, especially as regards our local Canadas is the *6th* (1983) *Checklist*. No subspecies is listed! And this note appears: "The northern populations of small Canada Geese have been variously treated taxonomically as three separate species, *B. hutchinsii* (Richardson, 1832) [HUTCHINS' OR RICHARDSON'S GOOSE, 172.3], *B. minima* Ridgway, 1885 [CACKLING GOOSE, 172.2], and *B. leucopareia* (Brandt, 1836) [TUNDRA GOOSE, 172.1]; as a single species under the name *B. hutchinsii* [CACKLING GOOSE]; or as one or more subspecies of *B. canadensis*. Consideration of the entire complex as a single species seems best for the present." (The underscoring of these important points is mine.) To bring you up to date: The *7th Checklist* (1998) follows the *6th* in listing no subspecies.

Why, despite this, Kevin Griffith mentions *B. c. maxima* in the 1998 *Bull's Birds of New York State* escapes me. Consider, however, what he says: "Resident breeding geese probably include some of both [the *canadensis* and *interior* subspecies] and a large proportion of *maxima*, or 'Giant' Canada Goose." What a turn-around: from Hansen's endangered race needing protection to the lawn pests of Griffith and, as it happens, of current waterfowl managers! (personal communication, Paul Hess) Has no one thought of the possibility that these 'giant' geese are bigger and fatter simply because they are lazy, pampered and overfed?

My point here is that attention to game bird subspecies gives wildlife managers an excuse to tamper with what I consider an already far too short goose season. While we concern ourselves with niggling



subpopulations, we're being inundated by the species as a whole. And we certainly don't want to provide an excuse for a season further curtailed to address the smaller numbers of *hutchinsii*.

An indication of just how far this race issue may be taken is found in the revised (1997) edition of Hansen's book. In it he insists that there are "at least 186 geographic races (subspecies) of these geese" and he promises that a forthcoming work will establish the validity of five true species (including, of course, *maxima*) within the "white-cheeked goose" complex. (This is despite John W. Aldrich's 1946 article "Speciation in the White-cheeked Geese" (*Wilson Bulletin* 58(2): 94-103) which identifies, among 254 museum specimens examined, only seven races, none of them *maxima*.)

I join Bill Whan in wondering if "all those goose-droppings in the water have had some neurotoxic effects" on a few game managers. Whether or not that is the case, I counsel extreme caution in calling attention to nonexistent subspecies to avoid even the possibility of contributing further to our increasingly serious Canada Goose overpopulation problem.

## **Protection of the Cameron Ranch Alvar in Ontario, Canada**

*by Lewis Crowell*

The Nature Conservancy of Canada agreed last spring to purchase the nearly 3,000 acre Cameron Ranch on the condition that the necessary funds be raised by this February. Only 80 miles north of Toronto, the Cameron Ranch is located in the heart of the Carden Plains, a vast (500 sq. km) region of native alvar grassland with scattered stunted trees, interspersed with wetlands, boreal "fens", and mixed conifer forests.

The abundance and diversity of wildlife here are phenomenal. Regular breeding species include the endangered Loggerhead Shrike, Upland Sandpiper, Sedge Wren, and unusually high populations of Grasshopper, Clay-colored, and Vesper Sparrows. The Carden Plains is a region of contrasts: Eastern Bluebirds and black bears, Common Nighthawks and Golden-winged Warblers are all quite common here.

The Cameron Ranch is the largest single property (2,869 acres) in this area and one of highest quality examples of alvar grassland, shrub land and savannah communities

However, high quality alvar also means easily accessible limestone. The December 2002 newsletter of the Couchiching Conservancy, (the principal part-

ner with the Nature Conservancy of Canada), gives us fair warning:

*"The year 2002 has also brought a sombre warning of the consequences if we fail (to raise the funds). The 1,000 acre Ferma property, just a few kilometres to the east (of Cameron Ranch) was approved as a quarry by the OMB (a ruling which overrode the local zoning decision), even though two pairs of loggerhead shrikes nest on the property. It is clear that we can't rely on the planning system to protect the future of Cameron Ranch – conservation ownership is the only way."*

At the present rate of licensing and development, the whole Carden Plains region will become a collection of limestone pits in just a few years. Not much different from what happened in the Harris Hill area near Buffalo, but on a much larger scale.

Is this of concern to us birders in Buffalo? I hope so. It would be unconscionable to let such a valuable property become yet another quarry.

Bird lovers are fortunate to have been given a head start in this land rush: the owner is willing to sell this ranch to the Nature Conservancy of Canada, ***IF they can raise 1.2 million (Canadian) dollars by this February.*** An additional \$400,000 (CAN) will also be needed for legal fees and to establish a permanent stewardship fund.

So far, the Nature Conservancy of Canada has raised about \$800,000. The tiny Couchiching Conservancy- only a handful of individuals - has raised a whopping \$200,000! We still need \$200,000 Canadian at an absolute minimum to close the deal by this February

Others who are sympathetic to this issue, as well as the Province of Ontario are looking closely at this sale as a measure of commitment of the conservation community

We need support from conservation groups in New York State, especially birding organizations like the BOS. Our goal is a challenge, but it is not out of reach. We are talking about a real chance to stop irreversible damage of prime birdwatching and wildlife habitat and a major IBA.

The Couchiching Conservancy  
Box 704, Orillia, Ontario, L3V 6K7  
E-mail: [nature@couchconservancy.ca](mailto:nature@couchconservancy.ca)  
Ph. (705) 326-1620, or (705) 329-3939 (daytime number)

Nature Conservancy of Canada,  
R.R. #5, 5420 Highway 6 North  
Guelph, Ontario, N1H 6J2  
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webpage [www.natureconservancy.ca](http://www.natureconservancy.ca)  
Ph. Toll Free 1-877-343-3532



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	3	4	Golden Hill SP	Morgante
"	14	1	Wilson Harbor	Watson
"	17	10	Fort Niagara SP	Klick (BOS)
"	23	3	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Morgante
"	23	58	Yates	Klick, Harris
Common Loon	9	2	Rushford	Klick, Harris
"	23	1	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Berry
"	30	1	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Horned Grebe	9	1	Dayton	Klick, Harris
Red-necked Grebe	2	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	3	2	Fort Niagara	Yoerg
"	3	1	Somerset	Morgante
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	2	4	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	24	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
* <u>Great Cormorant</u>	23	1	Youngstown	Wormington
D.-crested Cormorant	5	240	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
"	9	1	Cuba Lake	Klick, Harris
"	25	7	Buffalo Harbor	Watson
"	28	3	Buffalo	Morgante
Black-cr. Night-Heron	6 - 16	2	Buffalo	Yoerg
Snow Goose	2; 3	1; 1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	9	1	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
"	11	3	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	12	6	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	20	1	Sinking Ponds NP	Holmes
Canada Goose	2; 3	5; 1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
<u>B. c. hutchinsii</u>				
"	11	1	Fort Erie	Yoerg
Brant	3L	4	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Mute Swan	11	8	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	23	4	Wilson	Klick, Harris
Tundra Swan	2	6	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	7	5	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	9	38	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
"	11	200	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	12	81	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	15; 30	70; 36	Chautauqua Lake	Berry; Klick, Harris
Wood Duck	5	1	Niagara Falls	Watson
Northern Shoveler	2; 10	325; 300	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	12; 24	318; 202	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	14	1	Sinking Ponds NP	Holmes
"	17	73	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Green-winged Teal	13; 25	80; 35	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Canvasback	5	500	Niagara Falls	Watson
Redhead	2	4	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	5	4	Niagara Falls	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	2	280	Brocton Reservoir	Mosher
"	9	310	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
"	12	110	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Greater Scaup	5	1000	Niagara Falls	Watson
"	29	113	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Lesser Scaup	2	41	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	5	50	Niagara Falls	Watson
Harlequin Duck	9	1	Shadigee, Yates	Klick, Harris
"	23	1	St.Catharines, Ont.	Berry
Surf Scoter	5	2	Silver Creek	Rew
"	9	1	Allegany SP	DeSha
"	9	2	Shadigee, Yates	Klick, Harris
"	11	50	Jaeger Rocks	Yoerg
"	17	20	Jaeger Rocks	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	50	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
White-winged Scoter	3	100	Somerset	Morgante
"	11	50	Jaeger Rocks	Yoerg
Black Scoter	3	4	Somerset	Morgante
"	11	2	Jaeger Rocks	Yoerg
"	12	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	17	1	Batavia WWTP	Klick
"	24	2	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
Long-tailed Duck	11	50	Jaeger Rocks	Yoerg
"	23	40	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Berry
Bufflehead	11	2000	Jaeger Rocks	Yoerg
"	28	300	Buffalo	Morgante
Common Goldeneye	3	60	Somerset	Morgante
* <u>Barrow's Goldeneye</u>	24	2	Niagara Falls	Sherony
Hooded Merganser	9	550	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
"	9	90	Cuba Lake	Klick, Harris
Common Merganser	9	180	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
"	29	950	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Red-br. Merganser	2	2	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	16	17	Barcelona Harbor	Berry
Ruddy Duck	2; 10	1090; 500	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	9	49	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
"	9	36	Cuba Lake	Klick, Harris
"	12; 24	1140; 1200	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	17	710	Batavia WWTP	Klick
"	30	49	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Bald Eagle	2	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	5	1 ad.	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
"	9	2 ad.	Rushford	Klick, Harris
"	29	1	Queenston	Bellerby
"	30	1 ad.	Westfield	Klick, Harris
"	30	1 ad.	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Northern Goshawk	<u>9</u>	1	Pike	Klick, Harris
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	1	Busti	Berry
Rough-legged Hawk	5 - 30	7 reports	Throughout BOS area	Many observers



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Merlin	<u>3</u>	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	<u>3</u>	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
"	<u>7 - 29</u>	5 max	UB south campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	<u>2</u>	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	<u>12</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	<u>23</u>	1	Whirlpool SP	Klick
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	<u>10</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Killdeer	17L	6	Rock Pt. PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	17L	1	Batavia WWTP	Klick
Greater Yellowlegs	2; 3; 10	13; 22; 2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	12	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	12	3	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	17	2	Rock Pt. PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24L	1	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
Lesser Yellowlegs	5L	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Sanderling	5	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
"	17L	1	Rock Pt. PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Least Sandpiper	<u>20</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Sherony
White-r. Sandpiper	3L	1	Goat I.	D'Anna
Pectoral Sandpiper	2; 3	1; 2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	5	2	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	9L	6	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
*Purple Sandpiper	3F	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Yoerg
"	24	3	Buffalo Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	1	Buffalo Harbor	Klick
Dunlin	2; 3; 10	70; 105; 37	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	3	10	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	3	62	Goat I.	D'Anna
"	11	24	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	12	15	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	4; 14L	8; 12	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Watson
Wilson's Snipe	2	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	17L	1	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
American Woodcock	1	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Little Gull	1	1	Athol Springs	Andrle
"	3	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	19	1	Niagara Falls	Turisk
"	23	1	Niagara Falls	Morgante
"	24	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
<u>Black-headed Gull</u>	23	1	Niagara-on-the-Lake	D'Anna et al
Bonaparte's Gull	2; 10	3; 3	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	7; 11	69; 510	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	9	3	Cuba Lake	Klick, Harris
"	18; 28	1250; 3420	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	30	57	Chautauqua Lake	Klick, Harris
"	30	750	Westfield to Dunkirk	Klick, Harris
<u>California Gull</u>	23; 30	1; 1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Morgante
"	23; 24; 28; 30	2; 1; 1; 1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	23	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Berry
Iceland Gull	10F; 16	1; 1	Niagara Falls	Potter, D'Anna
"	16	2	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	23; 30	1; 3	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Morgante
"	23	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Berry



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Lesser Black-b. Gull	9	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	23; 30	1; 2	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Morgante
"	23	4	Niagara Falls	Morgante
"	23	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Berry
"	24	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	2	Goat I.	Chilton
Black-leg. Kittiwake	18	1	Athol Springs	Turisk, Andrie, Landau
"	20; 28	1; 1	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	22	1	Niagara Falls	Bellerby
"	23	1	Niagara Falls	Klick, Harris
"	30	1	Niagara Falls	Morgante
Common Tern	1	6	Athol Springs	Andrie
"	5; 9	3; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew; Rew, Horbett
"	8	4	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	9	1	Bird I. Pier	Watson
"	17L	2	Jaeger Rocks	Yoerg, Henderson
Forster's Tern	5	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
Long-eared Owl	17	3	Rock Pt. PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Short-eared Owl	17	1	Porter	S & T O'Donnell
"	24	3	Shelby	S & T O'Donnell
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	17	1	Rock Pt. PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Eastern Phoebe	2L	1	Lancaster	Morgante
Northern Shrike	3	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	9	1	Sinking Ponds NP	Holmes
"	23	1	Yates	Klick, Harris
"	25	2; 1	Chautauqua, Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	10; 24	1; 1	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
"	17	1	Porter	S & T O'Donnell
Common Raven	25	1	Alfred	Brooks
Horned Lark	2	15	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	24	3	Freedom	DeSha
Tree Swallow	16; 17	2; 1	Goat I.	D'Anna et al
"	17	1	Goat I.	Morgante
"	18; 23L	1; 1	Goat I.	Klick
N. Rough-w. Swallow	16; 17	111; 114	Goat I.	D'Anna et al
"	17	114	Goat I.	Watson, Morgante et al
"	18; 23	71; 37	Goat I.	Klick
"	23	6	Niagara Falls	Morgante
"	23; 28L	68; 4	Goat I.	D'Anna et al
*Cave Swallow	16; 17	1; 1	Goat I.	D'Anna et al
"	17	1	Goat I.	Watson, Morgante
"	18	1	Goat I.	Klick
"	18	1	Goat I.	Roberson
Carolina Wren	3 - 17	8 reports	Throughout BOS area	Many observers
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	9L	1	Como Park	Morgante
Hermit Thrush	16	2	Tifft NP	Andrie, Bogacki
Gray Catbird	1; 6; 7	1; 1; 1	Wheatfield	Potter
American Pipit	2	6	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	2	120	Stockton	Mosher
Tennessee Warbler	13L	1	Tifft NP	Andrie, Bogacki
Yellow-r. Warbler	5	2	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	9	1	Sinking Ponds NP	Holmes
"	17	1	Rock Pt. PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	18	1; 3	Goat I.	Klick; Roberson
* <u>Yellow-thr. Warbler</u>	6	1	Portland	Mosher
"	16	1	Portland	Berry, Sundell
Eastern Towhee	5	3	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Chipping Sparrow	3	1	Franklinville	DeSha
"	9; 10	1; 1	Alfred	Brooks
Fox Sparrow	3 - 15	2 max	Franklinville	DeSha
"	5	5	Frewsburg	Berry
"	8	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	9	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Swamp Sparrow	10	5	Kiantone	Berry
White-thr. Sparrow	25	3	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
White-cr. Sparrow	20	1	Portland	Turisk, Hamilton
Lapland Longspur	1	1	Stockton	Mosher
Snow Bunting	2	35	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	4	1	Wilson Harbor	Watson
"	5	17	Charlotte	Rew
"	6	17	Alfred	Brooks
"	8	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Yoerg
Eastern Meadowlark	9	1	Attica	Klick, Harris
"	26	3	Gerry	DeFrancisco
Rusty Blackbird	9	1	Attica Reservoir	Klick, Harris
Common Grackle	4	1	Franklinville	DeSha
"	5	1	Frewsburg	Berry
Purple Finch	12	5	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	14; 18	2; 2	Franklinville	DeSha
Pine Siskin	5	1	Frewsburg	Berry

<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total for the year 2002:</b>	<b><u>282</u></b>

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## Call for Hamburg Hawkwatch Volunteers

*by Jim Landau*

## Walter Klabunde

B.O.S. members recognize the truth that bird migration is a continuous process, occurring throughout the calendar year. And, although the weather report may still be calling for lake effect snow in the "ski-country" south of Buffalo, it will only be a matter of weeks before the northward spring hawk migration will commence in western New York.

This spring will mark the sixteenth year that migrant raptors and vultures will be recorded at the Hamburg Hawkwatch at Lakeside Memorial Park in Hamburg, NY. The official start is less than two months away. If you are interested in volunteering as a counter please contact Jim Landau at 941-3869 or e-mail at kjlandau@localnet.com.

Walter Klabunde, the Dean of Hawkwatching in the Niagara Peninsula and Honourary President of the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch, passed away Dec. 4, 2002 in Wilmington, DE. He was just six weeks shy of his 96th birthday. A tribute to Walter will be assembled and printed in a forthcoming issue of the Prothonotary. Those who knew Walter are encouraged to write a short note about their experience with him and forward the information to the editor (see page 130 for mail and Email addresses).



# **The Evolving Status of the Double-crested Cormorant in the BOS Study Area**

*by Bill Watson*

The 2002 breeding season resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of Double-crested Cormorant colonies in Region 1 and gave local bird lovers a better opportunity to study our only breeding Pelecaniformes. During the 2001 breeding season there were only two Double-crested Cormorant colonies, one at the Reef Lighthouse and one at Goat Island. During the 2002 breeding season Region 1 can boast of five Double-crested Cormorant colonies at the following locations: the Reef Lighthouse, Goat Island, Donnelly's Pier spit, Buckhorn Island State Park weir, and Motor Island.

The Buckhorn Island weir colony was abandoned during the 1997 breeding season when a Great Horned Owl raised a nestling in one of the cormorant nests, and the Motor Island colony was abandoned in 1998 when a Red-tailed Hawk nested in a Great Blue Heron nest which was located in the same tree in which the cormorants had nested. (These two events suggest a effective, natural, and humane way to eliminate Double-crested Cormorant colonies.)

This year we also learned of the reestablishment of a sixth colony in the Buffalo Ornithological Society study area on Mohawk Island which is off Rock Point Provincial Park. On July 3, 2002, Dr. D. V. Weseloh counted 303 Double-crested Cormorant nests on the island. Dr. Weseloh has been documenting breeding birds and nests on Mohawk Island for the last six years. In the 1940s and 1950s the Buffalo Audubon and BOS members would take an annual field trip to document breeding birds on Mohawk Island under the guidance of Harold Mitchell. Art Clark and Art Schaffner found twelve Double-crested Cormorant nests (eight with eggs) on Mohawk Island May 18, 1983. On June 15th there were 16 nests and two of these nests had three young on each of them. This was the first breeding by Double-crested Cormorants in the Buffalo Ornithological Society study area.

Although the Double-crested Cormorant has a uniquely prehistoric appearance (that makes one think it should be grouped with fossils such as Archaeopteryx, Pteranodon, Pterodactylus, and Rhamphorhynchus, rather than our modern Aves) this strange looking bird has highly evolved specialized behaviors that enable it to reshape its environmental habitat to its advantage.

At Motor Island the author has observed colonizing cormorants twisting the twigs of the living trees in their bills; eventually the twigs break off and can be

used for nesting material. (No previous documentation of twig twisting behavior has been found by the author.) Certainly it would be much easier to build nests out of twigs that have fallen on the ground as herons, egrets, and other birds do, but this behavior gives the Double-crested Cormorants an important adaptive advantage over their colonial fish eating rivals. This twig twisting behavior and their acidic droppings eventually cause the trees and bushes on the island to die.

Since herons and egrets are not typical ground nesters and Double-crested Cormorants can nest on the ground, when the trees and bushes die and deteriorate the herons and egrets are forced to leave. This way the Double-crested Cormorant is the sole inheritor of the best nesting colonies which are islands that are surrounded by abundant food, and protected from predators.

This is the scenario that will likely take place on Motor Island in the Niagara River where Great Blue Herons, Black-crowned Night-Herons, Great Egrets, and Double-crested Cormorants now breed, if man allows nature to take its course. However, this year the NYSDEC applied for a permit to shoot nesting adult cormorants on Motor Island, which was denied because the new U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Double-crested Cormorant Management Plan is not in place. It is likely that they will apply for a permit to shoot nesting cormorants next year, and it is also likely that it will be approved.

It is ironic that man will persecute cormorants, because the cormorants evolutionary success, like that of man, is based on its ability to change its environment to insure its successful survival as a species. The only species, that I can think of, that is more highly evolved than the Double-crested Cormorant in its ability to alter its habitat to suit its purpose is man.



# Prothonotary Index

## 1990-1999



### Contributors:

*Dr. Robert Andrie  
Dr. David Cooper  
Michael Hamilton  
Audrey Horbett  
Karen Landau  
Frances Rew  
Joseph Thill  
James Wojewodzki*

### Ten Year Index: 1990-1999

*By Karen Landau*

This index was made possible with efforts from a number of BOS members during the past two years. These volunteers sifted through *Prothonotary* back-issues from each year to find and record all articles, authors, verification birds, field trips and bird counts. All this data was forwarded to me to be entered into spreadsheets and then ultimately merged into the ten year compilation. Sincere thanks to Dr. Robert Andrie, Dr. David Cooper, Michael Hamilton, Audrey Horbett, Frances Rew, Joseph Thill, and James Wojewodzki for their countless hours of indexing and editing that went into this project.

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Jan.= p.1-13, Feb.= p.14-26, Mar.= p.27-42, Apr.= p.43-50, May  
=p.51-67, June = p.68-85 + addendum,

July = p. 86-95 + addendum, Aug.= p.96-106, Sept.= p.107-123,  
Oct.= p.124-134, Nov.= p.135-149+

addendum, Dec.= p.150-159.





**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
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Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 1020 Humboldt Parkway  
 Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

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## February – March Calendar

**February 12: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.

**February 23: Sunday. Niagara Co., New York Owl Trip.** Meet at 1 PM at Toys R Us entrance at Summit Park Mall on Williams Road, south of Niagara Falls Blvd., in the Town of Wheatfield. Leader: Chuck Rosenberg (716-434-9403, rosestod@localnet.com)

**February 26: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.

**March 12: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM. Kim Hunsinger will make a presentation about the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas.

**March 26: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.

**March 29: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip for early spring migrants.** Leader: Willie D'Anna (716-731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com). Meet at 8 AM at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104 north of Lockport.

**April 5: Saturday. Oak Orchard Swamp Field Trip.** Meet at 8:00 AM at Cayuga Pool parking lot which is on Route 77 in Iroquois NWR. Leader: Gail W. Seamans (585-937-5105). Come for waterfowl and rarities, and invite a friend who has not had the pleasure of being on a field trip.

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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# The PROTHONOTARY

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## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 69, No. 1 January, 2003

### THE MONTH: December

by Joe Thill

December was a cloudy and cold month which began with a deep ridge of high pressure building over Western New York and precipitating a major lake effect snowstorm that developed over the open waters of Lake Erie on December 1st and dumped a six to ten inch snowfall on Buffalo and environs. There followed 11 days of below average thermometer readings with the low temperature for the month, 3° (all temperatures F) at Buffalo recorded on December 3rd. This was 24° below normal. This cold spell was followed by 13 days of mild temperatures which quickly melted the earlier snow accumulation. During this respite, precipitation was limited to light rain and the highest temperature for the month at Buffalo, 50°, was recorded on December 19th and again on the following day. During this interlude, precipitation continued to be limited to light rain until a nor'easter along the Atlantic Coast veered close enough to Western New York to drop six to nine inches of snow across the region on December 25th, producing the fifth consecutive White Christmas. At Buffalo only light flurries persisted until month's end. Precipitation for the

days were 'partly sunny'! 24 days were described as 'Mostly cloudy'. (Meteorological data provided by the local Climate Summary of the National Weather Service via the Internet and Local Climatological Data of the National Climatic Data Center.)

December was a banner month for birders on the Niagara Frontier with waterbird observations taking pride of place. The warm open waters of Dunkirk Harbor proved to be an irresistible magnet for large numbers of waterfowl and other waterbirds seeking shelter from the cold choppy waters of Lake Erie. On December 26th, Brendan Klick and Don Harris visited this birder's hot spot where they were rewarded with the discovery of two Eared Grebes in the company of a small flock of Horned Grebes at the south end of the harbor. Klick had seen these grebes on several previous outings as they are rare but virtually annual passage migrants in our study area. These were identified by their steep crested foreheads, long dusky forenecks and bright red eye coloration. This grebe has become increasingly common in recent years as a late summer and fall migrant in small numbers. Also on December 26th, Klick and Harris found a small goose in a wintering flock of Canada Geese at the west end of Dunkirk Harbor which they determined by its size to be a smaller subspecies of the genus *Branta*, *B. c. hutchinsii*. This was the second sighting of this rare passage migrant in as many months, Mike Morgante having seen five birds of this subspecies at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge on November 2nd; he also saw single bird on the following day. (For further remarks on the status of this goose and related species see *Prothonotary* 68(1): 131-152.)

It was a great month for gulls and other waterbirds on the Niagara River from its source at Buffalo Harbor

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among the Bonaparte's Gulls to whom it bore a superficial resemblance, except for its slightly narrower wings, conspicuously shorter bill and diagnostic wedge-shaped tail. An assemblage of Canadian and American birders who were observing farther upriver were summoned to the scene and enjoyed good looks at the Ross's Gull, a life bird for many of them. Many birders who came to the scene on the days following the original sighting and scanned the river from the Canadian Falls and on both sides of the international boundary in the middle of the river to Queenston and beyond were disappointed in their quest; the Ross's Gull apparently had departed for parts unknown.

Far more compliant was a Common Black-headed Gull, another scarce winter visitor on the Niagara River. A verbal report from Rochester birder Jessie Barry who visited Niagara Falls in late November indicated that she saw a Black-headed Gull in the Niagara River at that time. Gordon Bellerby reported one

to its mouth at Niagara-on-the-Lake with nine species of larids to test the identification skills of birders from Canada and the United States. How appropriate therefore that the 'bird of the month' is that celebrated rarity of the last decade, Ross's Gull. This individual was first seen by Toronto birder Ron Scovell and members of the South Peel Naturalists Club of Oakville, Ontario in the course of a field trip to Niagara Falls, Ontario on December 1st. The group was scanning a flock of Bonaparte's Gulls flying at the base of the Canadian Horseshoe Falls in the lower Niagara River Gorge hoping to see a Black-legged Kittiwake reported at that locale earlier. Scovell detected the Ross's Gull flying and resting

at Queenston in the lower Niagara River on December 28th while Barbara Henderson and Peter Yoerg reported another, probably the same bird, at the Art Park Performance Center in Lewiston on the following day. Earlier, on December 19th, Ontario birders reported one individual in the Niagara River gorge between Queenston and Lewiston which was subsequently seen by Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter on December 22nd. There were also many oral reports of Black-headed Gull sightings that have not been documented with written descriptions of the birds. For the 11th consecutive year California Gulls reappeared in December on the rocky shoreline of the Lower Niagara River Gorge between Niagara Falls and the New York State power complex whose turbulent waters attract hundreds of wintering larids of several species. This year D'Anna and Potter and several other observers identified two adult California Gulls, one in definitive basic plumage and one in third basic plumage, providing field marks which hopefully will aid in field identification of these birds both perched and in flight. Alas, the excitement engendered among laridophiles over these records was tempered by the complete absence this season of two early winter favorites in our study area, Sabine's Gull and Franklin's Gull.

Other observations of interest in December include a second sighting of a Barrow's Goldeneye of dimensions and field marks suggestive of a male bird. It was seen flying over the Lake Ontario shoreline in the company of 'about a dozen' Common Goldeneyes by Brendan Klick. He saw it from an elevated area at the terminus of Dietz Road in the Town of Porter while participating in the annual Niagara Falls ON-NY Christmas Bird Count on December 28th. This was the second record for this very rare waterfowl in our study area in two months. Earlier on December 15th, Klick and Don Harris were employing 'spishing and whistling' to attract a flock of chickadees in the dense brush and shrubbery of an overgrown field on Staley Road in Grand Island when they heard the distinctive call notes of a Fox Sparrow which flew from brush onto an exposed limb in front of them. Another winter rarity, Eastern Phoebe, was seen by Salamanca birder Tim Baird during the annual Christmas Count of the Cattaraugus County Bird Club on December 14th. The bird was observed at streamside at the edge of a bottomland forest in the Town of Allegany. Baird watched it fly up from the ground with a 'small invertebrate in its bill' which it proceeded to devour. — The writer wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Bob Andrie, Willie D'Anna, Gerry Rising and Bob Wagner in the preparation of this article.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	6	72	Wilson	Klick
"	8	6	Yates	Klick, Harris
"	28	2	Porter	Klick
"	28	1	Wilson Harbor	Ewald
Common Loon	1	6	Niagara Falls	Watson
"	1	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Andrle, Landau
"	8	6	Wilson	Klick
"	8	5	Yates	Klick, Harris
"	28	1	Porter	Klick
Pied-billed Grebe	15	1	Devils Hole SP	Yoerg
"	22	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	26	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
Horned Grebe	1	4	Fort Erie, Ont.	Andrle, Landau
"	7	1	Four Mile Creek SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	15	4	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante
"	26	22	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	28	1	Porter	Klick
Eared Grebe	26	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick
D.-crested Cormorant	4	7	Niagara Falls	Watson
"	15	6	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante
Black-cr. Night-Heron	13	3	Buffalo	Yoerg
Canada Goose				
<u>B. c. hutchinsii</u>	26	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick
Mute Swan	7; 28	2; 4	Wilson Harbor	Ewald
"	28	2	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
Tundra Swan	4	16	Beaver I, SP/Ft. Erie	Watson
"	5	45	Beaver I.	Hess
"	17	287	Beaver I. SP	Burke, Burch
"	26	5	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick
Wood Duck	7	1	Wilson Harbor	Ewald
Gadwall	1	1	Niagara Falls	Watson
"	7	1	Goat I.	S & T O'Donnell
American Wigeon	1; 4	4; 8	Niagara Falls	Watson
American Black Duck	7; 28	20; 6	Wilson Harbor	Ewald
"	22	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	28	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
Northern Shoveler	4	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Northern Pintail	3; 22	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	15	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante
Green-winged Teal	3; 22; 26	1; 1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Redhead	28	30	Porter	Klick, Harris
"	28	39	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald



<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Lesser Scaup	28	10	Porter	Klick
"	28	4	Wilson Harbor	Ewald
King Eider	6	1	Wilson	Klick
Harlequin Duck	21	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg
Surf Scoter	28	1	Porter	Klick
"	29	1	Fort. Erie, Ont.	Turisk
White-winged Scoter	15	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante
"	28	820	Porter	Klick
"	28	115	Wilson Harbor	Ewald
"	28	33	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
"	30	6	Wilson	S & T O'Donnell
Black Scoter	22	2	Fort Erie, Ont.	Potter, D'Anna
"	28	3	Porter	Klick
Bufflehead	7; 28	15; 25	Wilson Harbor	Ewald
"	28	13	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
Common Goldeneye	28	339	Porter	Klick
<u>Barrow's Goldeneye</u>	28	1	Porter	Klick
Common Merganser	26	1035	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick
Red-br. Merganser	26	830	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
Bald Eagle	9; 10	3; 3	Navy I.	Burke, Burch
"	18	3	Beaver I. SP	Burch
"	22	1	Queenston	Yoerg
Rough-legged Hawk	4; 18	1; 1	Somerset	Ewald
Merlin	<u>1</u> - <u>24</u>	5 max	UB South Campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	<u>2</u>	1	Niagara Falls	Turisk
"	<u>6</u>	1	Buffalo	Burch
"	<u>12; 19</u>	1; 1	Buffalo	D'Anna
"	<u>30</u>	2	Buffalo	B & O Burch
Killdeer	8	1	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter, Klick, Harris
Purple Sandpiper	8; 15; 22	3; 2; 3	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
Little Gull	21	4	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
"	21	3	Bird I. Pier	Klick
"	22	2	Queenston	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	4	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Potter, D'Anna
"	28	2	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
<u>Black-headed Gull</u>	22	1	Lewiston	D'Anna, Potter
"	28	1	Queenston	Bellerby
"	29	1	Artpark	Yoerg, Henderson
Bonaparte's Gull	3; 10	1120; 6220	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	24; 28	3600; 2360	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
<u>California Gull</u>	1	1	Adam Beck Hydro	Watson
"	1, 7, 8	1	Adam Beck Hydro	D'Anna
"	23,24,28,30	2,1,1,1	Adam Beck Hydro	D'Anna
"	29	1	Adam Beck Hydro	Turisk
Iceland Gull	1 - 29	10 reports	Niagara River/Porter	Many observers
Lesser Black-b. Gull	1	2	Adam Beck Hydro	Watson
"	22	2	Adam Beck Hydro	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	1	Porter	D'Anna et al
"	29	1	Adam Beck Hydro	Turisk
Glaucous Gull	8	3	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
"	15	1	Niagara Falls	Yoerg



<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	28	1	Porter	Klick, Harris
Black-leg. Kittiwake	1	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
"	1	1	Niagara Falls	Bellerby
"	4	1	Niagara Falls	Andrle et al
"	6	1	Niagara Falls	Klick
* <u>Ross's Gull</u>	1	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
Snowy Owl	14; 21	1; 1	Niagara Falls Airt.	D'Anna
"	15	1	Niagara Falls Airt.	S & T O'Donnell
"	21	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
Short-eared Owl	2	3	Carlton	Ewald
"	10	7	Porter	S & T O'Donnell
"	28	2	Porter	Morgante
Red-headed Wdpkr.	28	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	29	1	Allegany SP	Baird
Eastern Phoebe	<u>14</u>	1	Allegany	Baird
Northern Shrike	2 - 29	9 reports	Throughout BOS area	Many observers
Common Raven	29	2	Allegany SP	Baird
Carolina Wren	2 - 30	9 reports	Throughout BOS area	Many observers
Winter Wren	28	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
"	28	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
Eastern Bluebird	5	6	Yates	Hess
"	28	5	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
"	28	3	Wilson	Ewald
Hermit Thrush .	28	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Potter et al
Gray Catbird	7	1	Beaver I. SP	S & T O'Donnell
Northern Mockingbird	28	1	Wilson	Ewald
"	30	1	South Park, Bflo.	Andrle
Yellow-r. Warbler	18	22	Buckhorn I. SP	Klick
"	28	5	Porter	D'Anna et al
Chipping Sparrow	4	1	Carlton	Ewald
Swamp Sparrow	28	2	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
White-thr. Sparrow	4	1	Cambria	Ewald
"	13	1	Beaver Meadow NC	Turisk
"	24	2	South Park, Bflo.	Andrle
"	28	5	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Ewald
White-cr. Sparrow	3; 4	1; 1	Eden Valley	Andrle
Lapland Longspur	28	1	Porter	Morgante
Snow Bunting	5	50	Fort Niagara SP	Hess
"	6	13	Wilson	Klick
"	15	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante
"	28	5	Porter	Morgante
Red-w. Blackbird	2	1	Pekin	Ewald
Eastern Meadowlark	8	1	Yates	Klick, Harris
Common Grackle	8	1	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
Pine Siskin	13	2	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki

<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:</b>	<b>283</b>
<b>Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue + Swainson's Hawk addenda (see below):</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total for the year 2002:</b>	<b><u>285</u></b>

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.



## Addenda-2001

<u>Townsend's Solitaire</u>	12/30	1	Bond Lake	Galas
<u>Common Yellowthroat</u>	12/16	1	Buckhorn Is. State Park	Yoerg

## Addenda-2002

<u>Mississippi Kite</u>	5/5	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	Feliciano
Northern Harrier	11/15	26	Ransomville	Ewald
* <u>Swainson's Hawk</u>	4/18	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	DeFrancisco
<u>Ferruginous Hawk</u>	4/11	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	Simmons
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	5/25	2	Java	Junkin
<u>Piping Plover</u>	10/9,10	1	Port Colbourne, Ont.	Roy
Black-legged Kittiwake	11/23	1	Goat Island	Ewald
Pine Warbler	11/9	1	Youngstown	D'Anna
Fox Sparrow	2/23	1	North Harmony	Miller

*Statisticians' Note:* In a situation that involves more than one observation of either the same bird, or of more than one, of a species which requires a verification report, the observer only needs to write up the first sighting fully; in subsequent sightings (s)he need only state that they saw the same key field marks that were previously included in the initial verification report. If there is reasonable doubt that it is not the same bird or birds, the Statisticians will determine whether a verification report is necessary.

Robert Andrlé

Frances Rew

## ATLAS 2000: The New York State Breeding Bird Project

*Richard C. Rosche*

Don't let the title confuse you! Yes, the ATLAS 2000 program began in the year 2000. No, the project is not yet completed. Regardless of the title, the ATLAS 2000 project is very much alive. We have just completed the third year of the five-year project that runs from 2000 to 2004.

Our Region 1 consists of the Western New York counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Niagara, Chautauqua, and Erie as well as the western halves of Orleans, Genesee, and Wyoming. This land area was divided into 635 square blocks. It is the goal of the project to have a field observer visit each of these blocks at least once during the five-year period.

Each observer attempts to find some kind of nesting evidence for as many species as possible in each block of land.

In general, if a species is recorded only once in a block, it is considered a "possible" nester. The next higher classification is a "probable nester"; the majority of the birds in this category fall into the "singing male on territory for more than ten consecutive days" category. The highest nesting evidence includes nests with eggs and/or young, fledglings out of the nest, and adults feeding recently fledged young.

The goal of the project is for an observer to record at least 76 species in each block with about half of

them confirmed as nesting species. This goal is attainable in many blocks in Western New York, especially those that contain good habitat diversity away from the immediate metropolitan areas. At the time of this writing in late January 2003, 175 blocks have been classified as "complete", this meaning that the highest attainable goal has been reached, depending on the location of the block and the experience of the observer.

There is no question that being able to identify bird songs is a big help when doing the field work. Of these 175 blocks, six have recorded over 100 species, the highest being 108 species in Chautauqua County's Watts Flats Wildlife Management Area by Jim Berry and his sons. Other blocks reporting over 100 species are those that contain the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge and the Tonawanda and the Oak Orchard Game Management Areas in Genesee and Orleans Counties; these are the responsibility of the ex-Assistant Refuge Manager, Steve Kahl, and the current Refuge Biologist, Paul Hess, with much help from the many birders who visit. Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter have recorded over a hundred species in some Zoar Valley blocks, and Vivian Pitzrick has done the same in a western Allegany County block. Over 90 species have been recorded in 16 blocks and over 80 in 48 blocks.

On the lower end, only 26 species have been tallied in an East Buffalo residential/commercial area. Bob and Pat Andrlé found 39 species in a block containing the brownfields of the former Bethlehem Steel Plant in



Lackawanna, where only nine species were known to nest in a previous Atlas during the early 1980's. Overall the region-wide average after three field seasons of work is about 76 species per censused block.

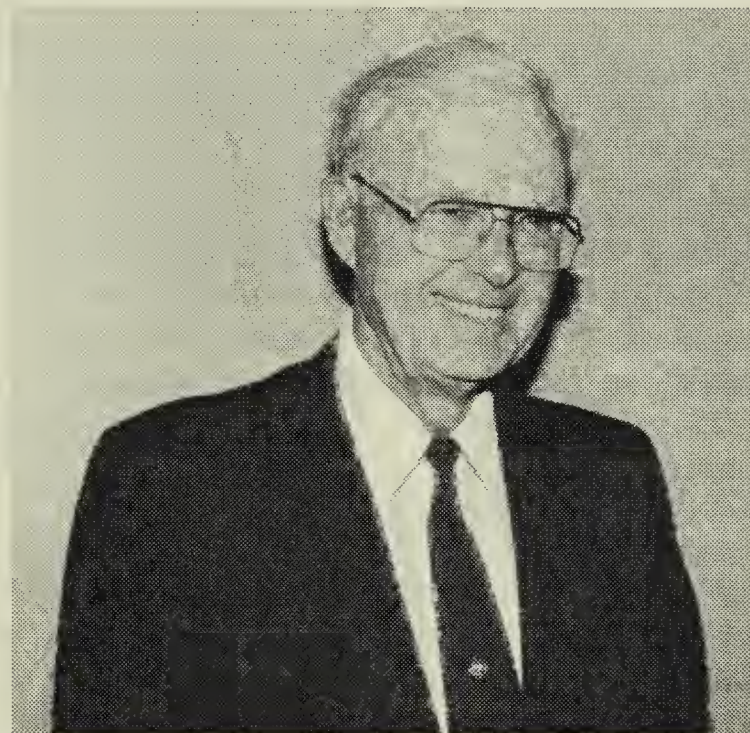
During 2000-2002, 193 species have been recorded in Region 1. Of these, 162 species have been confirmed, 13 are probable, and 18 are possible. These species, with their current status in parentheses, need to be confirmed as breeders: Snowy Egret (Pr), Gadwall (Po), Northern Pintail (Po), Ring-necked Duck (Po), Lesser Scaup (Po), Common Goldeneye (Po), Ruddy Duck (Pr), Golden Eagle (Po), Northern Bobwhite (Pr), Common Snipe (Pr), Wilson's Phalarope (Po), Caspian Tern (Po), Long-eared Owl (Po), Short-eared Owl (Pr), Whip-poor-will (Po), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (Po), Loggerhead Shrike (Po), White-eyed Vireo (Po), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (Po), Golden-winged Warbler (Pr), "Brewster's" Warbler (Pr), "Lawrence's" Warbler (Pr), Tennessee Warbler (Po), Yellow-throated Warbler (Pr), Prothonotary Warbler (Po), Kentucky Warbler (Po), Yellow-breasted Chat (Pr), Red Crossbill (Po), White-winged Crossbill (Pr), Pine Siskin (Pr), Evening Grosbeak (Pr).

Plans for the coming 2003 nesting season include the hiring of three people who are called "block busters" who will complete up to 40 blocks. These people are Timothy Baird, Brendan Klick, and yours truly. These observers will visit each of their assigned blocks once in the evening/night for nocturnal species, and twice during the optimal time in the very early morning. There are additional observers assigned to 320 blocks. At present, only 100 blocks of the 635 remain to be assigned in 2003 or 2004.

There is still room for everyone and anyone to assist in this project. We not only need more birders to take on the still unassigned blocks, but we need as much actual nesting data from throughout the region as possible. For instance, if you have a wren or a bluebird nesting your backyard box, please let us know. We are also searching for inexpensive overnight accommodations in the southern tier areas that would enable visiting birders to cover blocks in that area without having to travel to the Buffalo metropolitan areas every night for shelter. If you can assist in any way, please let me know as Coordinator for the project in Western New York.

## Tributes to Dr. Walter Klabunde

Walter Klabunde had an extraordinary passion for the study of birds in the Niagara Region. This was displayed through his leadership and participation in the Canadian and American birding community. Below, his influence on Buffalo Ornithological Society and Niagara Falls Nature Club members, among many others, is reflected in letters of remembrance.



Walter Klabunde 1986

Photo Courtesy of Kay Roy

Dr. Klabunde was recipient of the first Roy W. Sheppard Award in 1985, a distinction established after the first honorary president of the Niagara Falls Nature Club in Niagara Falls, Ontario. The award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated worthy achievement in conservation, research, education, and preservation of nature. Dr. Klabunde was recognized, in part, for his pioneering effort in establishing the Grimsby Hawkwatch. His letter of thanks to the Club, reproduced below, was printed first in *Nature Niagara News*, Bulletin No. 179; May-Aug, 1986. The words clearly reflect his exemplary character and passion for birds.

*"I feel extremely honoured to have been chosen the first recipient of the Roy W. Sheppard Award, and wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Club for this very special recognition.*

*Hawkwatching, a specialized area of bird watching, displaced the hunters who tried to annihilate the hawk population. After the establishment of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in 1934, ornithologists became increasingly aware of these very spectacular hawk migrations. During the next four decades, many lookouts became attractions to birders including: Cape May, N.J., Hawk Cliff, Ont., Braddock Bay, N.Y., Derby Hill in Mexico, N.Y., and Beamer Conservation Area in Grimsby, Ontario.*



*The disaster of DDT and related pesticides in the environment which threatened the populations of Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, and Osprey made ornithologists realize that hawks being at the top of the food chain, were indicators of environmental pollution. Thus in 1974, the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) was formed, its purpose was to study and understand population trends of all raptors, with the idea of stopping such a threat to our environment in the future. After all, man is also on the top of the food chain.*

*Since 1975 the data obtained at Grimsby have been filed with HMANA, and the lookout has been manned daily since 1980 from March 1 through May 31.*

*Migrating hawks try to conserve energy by utilizing updrafts or thermals for a lift. They generally avoid crossing large bodies of water. Thus the flight paths of the northern spring migration concentrate near the south shore of the lakes. The Niagara Escarpment generates these updrafts and Beamer is ideal as it is within 2 km of Lake Ontario. Migration paths are generally funneled within 1 km of the escarpment so that 80 to 90 percent of the migrating hawks can be observed from the Beamer parking area: annually 14,000 to 19,000 birds. Although Beamer cannot compete with the record high daily flights observed at Holiday Beach, Ont. (95,000+), or Hawk Cliff, Ont., (70,000+), its own record established 21 April 1985 was 7,007, and this past week, on 18 March, another record for March was established - 1,080 raptors including seven Bald Eagles, an all time high for this species for one day. The number of migrating Red-shouldered Hawks gets Grimsby top ratings as well.*

*I sincerely welcome all my fellow Niagara Falls Nature Club members to join me at Beamer any weekday from March through May to witness this very spectacular hawk activity."*

### **Dr. Walter Klabunde (1907-2002)**

*by Frances Rew*

With the passing of Walter Klabunde on December 4, 2002, our Society lost one of its most loyal, dedicated, and productive members. Walter and his wife, Harriette, joined the B.O.S. in 1948, and throughout their long membership contributed greatly to the knowledge of the avifauna of the Niagara Frontier Region. Harriette, long-time Treasurer and a President of the Society, died on October 29, 1994 at age 89.

When I recall the many, many tasks Walter undertook for the Society, it seems there are three that are truly significant.

In 1956 a map of the 28 sections of the B.O.S. territory was included with the May issue of *The Prothonotary*. Subsequently a committee was formed for the purpose of producing individual section maps and it was Walter who prepared the plates from which these

28 maps were printed. Map sets are given to each member of the Society and have been an indispensable item in our birding kits.

In the mid-sixties there was much discussion at our meetings as to whether an Ornithological Society should own a wildlife refuge that was not used for research. Walter saw an opportunity and immediately assumed the Chairmanship of the Refuge Committee, organized work parties, cleared trails, led many field trips, particularly for Woodcock on early spring evenings, and, most importantly, he and Harriette conducted a two-year breeding bird study there, the results of which were published in *The Prothonotary*.

In 1965, Walter also took responsibility for organizing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird Survey in our area, laying out the routes which are still being used today. He was diligent in analyzing the received data and publishing the results for almost 30 years.

In addition to these major contributions, Walter served as President of the Society, served on the Council, chaired a NYS Federation meeting, led many field trips, including a trip to Michigan for Kirtland's Warbler, wrote articles on many subjects, served on innumerable committees, and was present at most regularly scheduled B.O.S. meetings. For all this we will remember Walter with gratitude, but we will mourn the man - intelligent, kindly, always good humored, a loyal friend, and a cheerful birding companion.

### **Walter Klabunde**

*by Gerry Rising*

I didn't know Walter Klabunde until the very end of his birding career when he turned over to me in the early-1990s his records of the regional June Breeding Bird Censuses. At that time, of course, those records were all tabulated by hand, a few of them even before electronic calculators were available. On some of those early pages I could even make out his check-sums, exactly the kind of annotations my father, an accountant, would make in his records when I was a child watching over his shoulder.

That association was not lost on me for Walter was a father figure in our relationship. He patiently took me through the kinds of calculations he performed so carefully and so accurately. When I later computerized the records and was able to have the machine repeat those calculations at the press of a couple of keys, I found no errors whatsoever in Walter's work.

But our time together was not all devoted to spreadsheets. Quite the contrary, we more often talked of birds: the nuthatches and titmice at their yard feeders,



the changes displayed by the records like the steep drop in Brown Thrasher numbers, and our own field experiences with regional newcomers like House Finches and still earlier cardinals. Our hours together were some of the most relaxing I have ever spent.

Even knowing him so briefly, I have sorely missed this fine man and his lovely and equally kind wife as well. Harriette's plate of Toll House cookies I had cleared off long before Walter and I finished working on those bird records.

## **Walter Klabunde (1907-2002)**

*by Mike Street*

Walter Klabunde, Dean of Hawkwatching in the Niagara Peninsula, passed away Dec. 4, 2002 at Christiana Hospital in Newark, Delaware, at the age of 95. He was Honourary President of the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch and a past-President of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

Walt was born January 11, 1907 in Kenosha, Wisconsin to Otto & Toni Klabunde. As only German was spoken at home he first learned English in elementary school, but this did not hold him back. Graduating a year early from high school, he went on to the University of Illinois where he received a B.Sc. (1928) and Ph.D. (1933) in Chemistry, and met his future wife Harriette in Chem. Lab. After hitchhiking around the country looking for a job, he arrived back in Ohio (where Harriette and son Charles were staying) with only loose change in his pockets but bringing good news. He had been offered a job with DuPont in Niagara Falls, NY, where he worked for over 35 years, retiring in 1969.

Walt and Harriette started birding shortly after WWII when they took courses offered by Winston Brockner of the Buffalo Ornithological Society. Walt and son Phil, with Charles' help, assembled and collimated three pairs of 7x50 B & L binoculars from war surplus kits supplied by Edmond Scientific Co. (Buying the metal and glass parts separately allowed them to avoid the 10% luxury tax on optical items.) Walt was also architect and general contractor for the Lewiston, NY home the family built in 1950, doing all of the electrical work, painting, landscaping and some of the carpentry.

Eventually birding led Walt to raptors. George Meyers of Grimsby, ON remembers watching the migration from a lookout at the local Beamer Conservation Area one day in 1974-75 when a tall stranger - Walt - came up and asked, "Is this a good place to watch hawks?" George recalls, laughing, that Walt

said he was part of an 'ad hawk' committee of Buffalo area birders who were trying to determine the spring migration route of raptors that turned west when they reached the south shore of Lake Ontario. Gradually working their way along the Niagara Escarpment from the Niagara River the group, represented by Walt on this day, had arrived at Beamer CA.

Dave Copeland, the original hawk count Coordinator at Grimsby, remembers meeting Walt at HMANA Conference II in Duluth, MN in September 1976 and seeing him at Grimsby the following spring. Walt first counted hawks at Beamer CA in 1979. The following year he began counting Monday through Friday from March 1 to May 15, making the one-hour trip across the border to Grimsby from Lewiston and back every day. He continued doing five days a week until 1991, covered three days a week in 1992-93, and after that came to Grimsby regularly until moving to Wilmington, DE in 1997.

In 1986 his work and dedication to the hawks at Grimsby earned Walt the Niagara Falls Nature Club's R. W. Sheppard Award for worthy achievement in the conservation, research, education and preservation of nature. Following its formation in 1990 Walt was named Honourary President of the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch. Even after spending thousands of hours at Beamer, he could still get excited by raptors. One day in April 1991 I arrived at Beamer about 08:45 to find a wide-eyed Walt just itching to tell someone something. To my "What did I miss?" he replied, "Three Golden Eagles travelling together, right overhead, 100 feet up!!!!" His feet hardly touched the ground for the rest of the day.

Walt will be missed, but the knowledge he passed on and the data he gathered during his time at Beamer will remain as part of his legacy to hawkwatchers in particular and birdwatchers generally. He and Harriette, who passed away in 1996, are survived by Charles, Phil and their sister Suzanne, and by 5 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

My thanks to Gordon Bellerby, Dave Copeland, Bruce Duncan, Mary Ellen Hebb, Phil Klabunde, George Meyers and Kayo Roy for their help in preparing this note about Walter

## **Dr. Walter Klabunde Remembered**

*by Bill Watson*

Most of the older members of the Buffalo Ornithological Society remember Dr. Walter Klabunde as a past President from 1952-1954 and 1967-1968,



Honourary President of the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch, Fellow of the Buffalo Ornithological Society, and tireless worker at the BOS Wildlife Refuge creating and maintaining the nature trails.

Perhaps one of Walt's most important contributions was his creation of the 28 sectional maps. These first appeared in the 1956 May issue of *The Prothonotary* as "Sectional Divisions of the Territory of the Buffalo Ornithological Society." These maps assured a more uniform and complete coverage of the BOS Territory during the April, May, and October Counts.

In "A New Late Nesting Record for Tufted Titmouse in New York State," which describes a July 3rd record of nestling Tufted Titmice in Niagara County, I failed to mention that the first breeding record of Tufted Titmouse in Niagara County (and for that matter one of the first Tufted Titmouse breeding sites in Western New York) was documented by Walter and Harriette Klabunde from July 17- 31, 1966 in Lewiston, New York. The Klabundes' Tufted Titmouse breeding location is illustrated on page 405 of *Birds of New York State* (Bull 1974).

Perhaps my fondest memories of Walt and Harriette were the field trips they led. On the first Sunday in March Walt and Harriette would lead the Ontario Plains Field Trip, and on the third Sunday in April they would lead the Grimsby Hawkwatch Field Trip. I enjoyed the early March Ontario Plains Field Trip the best, and in particular the trip on March 2, 1986. That day I personally tallied 45 species. Walt first took us to Lewiston Docks where he showed us a Surf Scoter among the White-winged Scoters, Old Squaw, and Red-breasted Mergansers. Here was our first Mockingbird; we would have others at Joseph Davis S. P. and on Dickersonville Road. In Youngstown at a feeder on Main Street, Walt showed us seven Pine Siskins with twenty American Goldfinches. Walt then took us to Fort Niagara to see a female and immature male King Eider and Red-headed Woodpecker. In the Town of Porter there were Northern Harriers, a Rough-legged Hawk, Horned Larks, and Snow Buntings. However, my favorite memory of Walter Klabunde and his Ontario Plains field trip was the American Robins. We saw them in an apple orchard, on the ground, sitting perfectly still. They were like no other robins I had ever seen before. They did not even blink an eye. Standing like stoned statues, it was obvious that the robins had been imbibing on fermented apples for quite some time and were quietly standing on the ground, among the rotten apples, in a drunken stupor. I will never forget Walt Klabunde, his field trips, and those drunken robins.

Willie D'Anna



A juvenile-plumaged Pied-billed Grebe first observed on the Niagara River December 22, 2002 and then photographed January 1, 2003.



## Buffalo Audubon Iroquois Program Calendar

- Saturday, March 1:** 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Volunteer Meeting @ 10:00 am
- Saturday, March 8:** 2:00 pm -7:30 pm: Iroquois/Oak Orchard Owl Day Trip
- Saturday, March 15:** 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour  
12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:30 pm -3:30 pm: Focus On... Waterfowl, Speaker Brett Ewald
- Saturday, March 22:** 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour;  
12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On... River Otters, Speaker Ann Terninko; 6:30 pm -9:00 pm: Owl Prowl, Leader Chuck Rosenberg
- Saturday, March 29:** 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour;  
12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On... Bald Eagles, Speaker Mike Allen
- Saturday, April 5:** 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour;  
10:30 am -12:00 pm: Basic Birding, Speaker Ed Ratajczak; 12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On... History & Management of INWR, Speaker Paul Hess
- Saturday, April 12:** 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour;  
12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On... Bluebirds; 4:00 pm -5:30 pm: Bird Walk; 8:00 pm -9:00 pm: Frog Frenzy
- Saturday, April 19:** 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour;  
12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On...Buffalo Audubon Nature Preserves; 4:00 pm -5:30 pm: Bird Walk - Kanyoo Trail; 8:00 pm -9:30 pm: Owl Prowl, Leader Chuck Rosenberg
- Saturday, April 26: Refuge Open House; Family Day #1;**  
10:00 am - 12:30 pm Worms For Kids program; 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour; 12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 12:00 pm -2:00 pm: Wetlands Demo w/ Jessica Morgan; 12:00 pm -4:00 pm: Pond Studies w/ Mark Lazeration; 1:00 pm -4:00 pm: Beavers & Mammals; 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm: Canoe Oak Orchard Creek through the Swamps; 4:00 pm -5:30 pm: Bird Walk; 7:30 pm -9:00 pm: Woodcock Walk w/Jessica Morgan
- Saturday, May 3:** 8:00 am -9:30 am: Bird Walk; 9:00 am -1:00 pm: Canoe Trip w/Mike Drahms; 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Wildflower Walk w/Kalista Lehrer; 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour; 10:30 am -12:00 pm: Basic Birding; 12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On... 'Live' Hawks, Owls and More; 8:00 pm -10:00 pm: Owl Prowl - Kanyoo Trail
- Saturday, May 10: Intl. Migratory Bird Day; Family Program Day #2;** 8:00 am -9:00 am: Warbler walk, Leader Mike Morgante; 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour; 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Wildflower Walk w/Mike Siuta; 10:30 am -12:00 pm: 4 - H Best Buds Group; 12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 12:00 pm -4:00 pm: Pond Studies w/Mark Lazeration; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On...Spring Warblers, Speaker Dick Miga; 2:00 pm -3:00 pm: Bird Walk for the Family; 8:00 pm -9:00 pm: Woodcock Walk w/Jessica Morgan
- Saturday, May 17:** 8:00 am -9:30 am: Spring Migrant Bird Walk; 10:00 am -12:00 pm: Driving Tour; 10:00 am -11:00 am: Wildflower Walk w/Sheila Hess; 12:00 pm -6:00 pm: Scope Watch; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm: Focus On...Bird Population Monitoring, Speaker Jessica Morgan; 6:30 pm -8:00 pm: Secret Birds of the Marsh walk

For details about Meeting Places, Times, contact information for the Canoe Trips, and Last minute changes go to our website <http://www.wildeyes.com/iroquois/schedule>.

## The 74<sup>th</sup> BOS Christmas Bird Count

by William Bogacki

The BOS Christmas Bird Count was conducted in overcast, misty weather on December 15, 2002. A record total of 93 species were recorded, comprised of 63,975 individual birds.

Census Area: Centered on Grand Island including both branches of Niagara River and adjacent territory.

Weather: The morning and afternoon were overcast. Temperatures ranged from a morning low of 32 °F to an afternoon high of 36 °F. Winds were from the west ranging from 5-15 m.p.h. The Niagara River was free of ice. Snow cover was about two inches.

Coverage: 42 observers in 17 parties made observations from 5:15 am to 4:30 pm. Party hours were 128.75 (49.5 on foot and 79.25 by car), plus 3.5 hours at feeders and 11.75 hours owling. Party miles were 714.5 (40 by foot and 674.5 by car).

### Species (and number of individuals) recorded:

Common Loon	7
Pied-billed Grebe	2 (K)
Horned Grebe	13
Double-crested Cormorant	9 (A,B,D)
Great Blue Heron	21
Tundra Swan	159(D,K,Q)high
Canada Goose	3284
Green-winged Teal	1 (A)
American Black Duck	84
Mallard	2625
Northern Pintail	1 (A) low
Gadwall	98
American Wigeon	66 (A,F)
Canvasback	6549
Redhead	100 (D,K,N)
Ring-necked Duck	82 high
Greater Scaup	6307 high
Lesser Scaup	3466 high
Long-tailed Duck	48 (A,J,N)
Black Scoter	1 (N)
Surf Scoter	1 (N)
White-winged Scoter	2 (A)
Common Goldeneye	2418
Bufflehead	527
Hooded Merganser	47
Common Merganser	1526
Red-breasted Merganser	96
Ruddy Duck	5 (D)
Bald Eagle	12 (high)
Northern Harrier	1 (G)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4 (C,J,P)
Cooper's Hawk	11
Red-tailed Hawk	68
Rough-legged Hawk	1 (B)



Am. Kestrel	26
Merlin	1 (Q)
Ring-necked Pheasant	2 (C,N)
Wild Turkey	30 (B) high
American Coot	28
Killdeer	1 (N)
Purple Sandpiper	2 (A)
Bonaparte's Gull	1801
Ring-billed Gull	6412
Herring Gull	8931
Iceland Gull	2 (A)
Lesser Black-backed Gull	7 (A,M)
Glaucous Gull	3 (A)
Great Black-backed Gull	453
Rock Dove	1520
Mourning Dove	437
Eastern Screech Owl	21
Great Horned Owl	5 (A,C,N)
Snowy Owl	1 (G)
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1 (N)
Belted Kingfisher	9
Red-bellied Woodpecker	22
Downy Woodpecker	74
Hairy Woodpecker	27
Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker	39
Blue Jay	297
Am. Crow	1169
Black-capped Chickadee	273
Tufted Titmouse	21
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1 (H)
White-breasted Nuthatch	44
Brown Creeper	13
Carolina Wren	6 (K,P,Q)
Golden-crowned Kinglet	36
Eastern Bluebird	20 (D,E,N) high
Hermit Thrush	3 (E,N)
American Robin	375
Gray Catbird	1 (N)
Northern Mockingbird	6 (A,E,G)
Cedar Waxwing	25 (A,E,N)
Northern Shrike	2 (B,E)
European Starling	11342
Yellow-rumped Warbler	12 (A,K) high
Northern Cardinal	114
American Tree Sparrow	142
Fox Sparrow	1 (N)
Song Sparrow	14
Swamp Sparrow	2 (A,Q)
White-throated Sparrow	109
White-crowned Sparrow	7 (C,E,L)
Dark-eyed Junco ( <i>J. hyemalis</i> )	198
Snow Bunting	1 (A)
Red-winged Blackbird	13
Common Grackle	15 (H)
Brown-headed Cowbird	215
Purple Finch	1 (E)
House Finch	375
American Goldfinch	217
House Sparrow	1406

**TERRITORIES & OBSERVERS:** (Names of section compilers are printed in boldface.)

- A. Canada: Rainbow Bridge south to the Welland River and the Niagara River west to M.C.R.R., Portage road and area boundary. **Willie D'Anna**, Mike Morgante, Jim Pawlicki, Betsy Potter. 61 species; 9868 individuals.
- B. Canada: Welland River south to Black Creek and the Niagara River west to the QEW and area boundary. **Ed Crohn**, Mary Ann Stegmeier, Paul Ziebarth, Virginia Ziebarth. 22 species; 1293 individuals.
- C. Canada: QEW west to area boundary and south to Bowen Road. **Mike Hamilton**. 29 species; 1845 individuals.
- D. Canada: Black Creek south to the Peace Bridge and the Niagara River west to the QEW. **Frances Rew**, Audrey Horbett. 37 species; 5859 individuals.
- E. Canada: Bowen Road south to area boundary and east to the QEW and the Niagara River. **Drew Campbell**, Brad Clements, Blayne Farnam, Jean Farnam, Kayo Roy. 38 species; 8920 individuals.
- F. Niagara Falls: Porter Road, Hyde Park Boulevard, Pine Avenue and Main Street south to the Niagara River, including Goat Island, Cayuga Island east to Military Road. **Lynne Landon**, Terry Yonker. 29 species; 14894 individuals.
- G. North Tonawanda: Military Road southwest to the New York State Barge Canal and Niagara River and northeast to the area boundary. **Don Roberson**, Robert Andrie, Thomas Bearss, Timothy Simon. 37 species; 1343 individuals.
- H. Tonawanda: Sheridan Drive north to the New York State Barge Canal and Niagara River and east to the area boundary. **Gerry Rising**, Patty Bogan, Mike Galas, Eric Labato, Bill Watson. 40 species; 1881 individuals.
- J. Buffalo: Sheridan Drive east and south to the area boundary and west to the Niagara River. **Jim Landau**, Karen Landau, Jim Wojewodzki. 36 species; 4594 individuals.
- K. Grand Island: West of Stony Point Road, north of Huth and Long Roads to the Niagara River. **Thomas O'Donnell**, Susan O'Donnell. 38 species; 423 individuals.
- L. Grand Island: Huth and Long Roads south to Whitehaven Road and Stony Point Road and west to the Niagara River. **Bill Burch**, Tom Burke. 31 species; 1860 individuals.
- M. Grand Island: East of Stony Point Road and north of Whitehaven Road to the Niagara River. **Mike Zebe-hazy**. 40 species; 740 individuals.
- N. Grand Island: Whitehaven Road south to Love Road and Baseline Road west to the Niagara River. **Brendan Klick**, Don Harris. 59 species; 3068 individuals.
- O. Grand Island: Whitehaven Road south to Love Road and Baseline Road east to the Niagara River. **Brendan Klick**, Don Harris. 20 species; 125 individuals.
- P. Grand Island: Love Road south to Spaulding Road from the East Branch to the West Branch of the Niagara River. **Doug Happ**, Pat Martin. 36 species; 5947 individuals.
- Q. Grand Island: South of Spaulding Road to the Niagara River. **William Bogacki**, Ed Ratajczak, Dennis Russel. 44 species; 1180 individuals.



## Erie County Parks Master Plan

by Michael Davis

The county held two open houses in the fall of 2002 exhibiting their master plan for the management of all 38 county owned parks. This article is an effort to provide a synopsis of that plan which is to be implemented over a period of 15 to 20 years.

The plan starts by looking at the status of facilities and existing plans. The county states its intent to rehabilitate trails and to connect trails among surrounding communities and attractions. It also considers public waterfront access with an eye toward tourism potential. Lastly, the plan reviews park management.

While some of these activities sound inconsistent with preserving bird habitat, their elaboration goes a long way to alleviate concerns. Goal 1 is to build a connected county-wide system for environmental conservation as well as recreation. And goal 3 talks about preserving and enhancing our natural and cultural heritage. Under this heading the county states its desire to "identify, designate, protect and restore significant natural areas" and to "ensure that facilities development, recreation activities are compatible with resource protection." As part of this goal the plan creates the category of Heritage Parks. Chestnut Ridge, Akron Falls, Como Lake, Ellicott Creek and Emery Park are listed here. Their focus is on "maintaining the integrity of the natural environment through conservation and land management practices."

My interest in Hunters Creek Park in Wales has led me to several people with conservation interests over the past few years and ultimately to my being informed about the open house. This park along with Beeman Creek, Eighteen Mile Creek, Franklin Gulf, Scoby Dam and Boston Forest are placed under the heading of Conservation Parks. In this category, activities are to be "self-directed", without compromising the environmental integrity of the park.

The open houses exhibited plans specific to the individual parks and I spent time looking over the discussion of the Hunter's Creek property. Happily, the top priority as stated in the plan is preservation and enhancement of the environment. This applies to others in the Conservation Parks category as well and the protection of nature is a theme that permeates the plans for all the parks. The Hunters Creek plan provides for buffers around park land and the maintenance of field habitat that is adjacent to wooded portions along creek gorges.

Most significantly, the plan explicitly excludes

hunting, ATVs and other motorized vehicles, snowmobiles using designated trails the sole exception. Mountain bikers, leashed dogs and horseback riders remain welcome. These prohibitions are shared by all parks, but there are specifics for each site covered by the master plan. You can look at the overall (and specific) plans at the Erie County web site <[www.erie.gov](http://www.erie.gov)>. The website mentions a number of people willing to answer questions including Erie County Parks Commissioner Larry Jasinski and Dean Gowen of Parsons on Franklin Street, both of whom have been very helpful to me.

## Birds of Conservation Concern 2002

by Gerry Rising

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recently posted its listing of *Birds of Conservation Concern 2002* on the web. The complete report may be downloaded from the address <[migratorybirds.fws.gov/reports/bcc2002.pdf](http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/reports/bcc2002.pdf)>. Such.pdf files may be displayed (and printed) with the free software, Acrobat Reader.

[Before reading further, you might wish to make up your own list of the birds that appear in our *Date Guide* you would consider of conservation concern. You can then compare your results with the list appearing at the end of this article. I suspect that some of those listed and others not listed will surprise you as much as they did me.]

According to the Executive Summary, "Bird species considered for inclusion on lists in this report include nongame birds, gamebirds without hunting seasons, subsistence-hunted nongame birds in Alaska; and Endangered Species Act candidates, proposed endangered or threatened and recently delisted species. Assessment scores...are based on several factors, including population trends, threats, distribution, abundance, and area importance. These assessment scores serve as the foundation on which we built the *BCC 2002* lists."

Of special interest to regional birders is the list of species of concern in the region which includes almost all of the BOS area: "Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Plain—U.S. portion only". The species are: Peregrine Falcon, Upland Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Marbled Godwit, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Common Tern, Black-billed Cuckoo, Whip-poor-will, Red-headed Woodpecker, Sedge Wren, Golden-winged Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Canada Warbler, Henslow's Sparrow and Bobolink.



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**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
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Return Service Requested

## March – May Calendar

- March 12: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM. Kim Hunsinger will discuss the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas.
- March 26: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.
- March 29: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip for early spring migrants.** Leader: Willie D'Anna (716-731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com). Meet at 8 AM at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104 north of Lockport.
- April 6: Sunday. Oak Orchard Swamp Field Trip.** Leader: Gail Seamans (585-937-5105 or Gails@netacc.net) Meet 8:00 AM at Cayuga Pool parking lot on Route 77 in Iroquois NWR. Waterfowl & rarities. Invite a friend.
- April 9: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.
- April 13: April Count.** Coordinator: Mike Hamilton (881-6709 or mhsr@wzrd.com)
- April 23: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.
- April 27: Sunday. Braddock Bay Trip.** This annual trip to the Hawkwatch will be co-led by Mike Zebehazy (662-6987 or zebs@adelphia.net) and Bob Spahn (GOS). Meet at the Tanning Bed at Main and Transit at Braddock Bay (Monroe County) for a 9 AM rendezvous with the GOS. This trip may be cancelled due to weather conditions.
- May 4: Tift Nature Preserve and Times Beach** for warblers. Leader: Bill Bogacki (674-5781). Meet at 7:00 AM at the Tift N. P. parking lot.
- May 18: May Count.** Coordinator: Robert Deleon (626-0325 or RLDeleon@Yahoo.com)

**Calendar for the Buffalo Audubon Iroquois program is on page 11.**

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

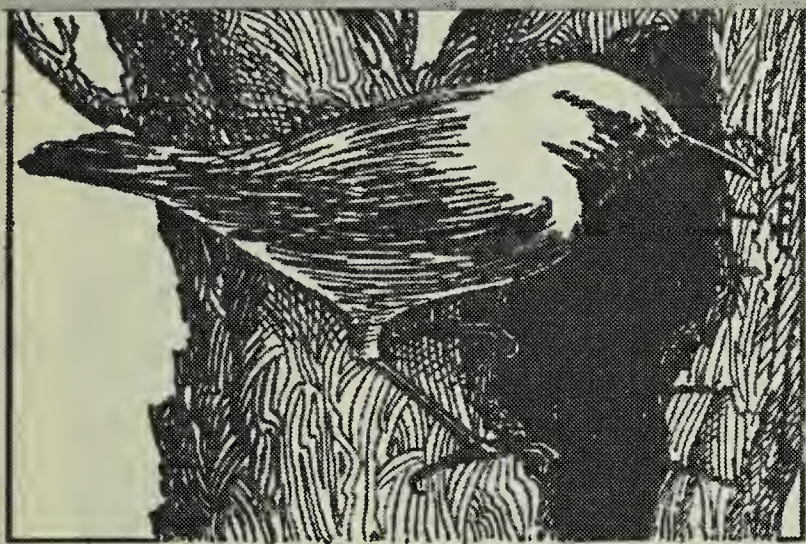
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# The PROTHONOTARY



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## THE MONTH: January

*by Mike Zebehazy*

January 2003 will be remembered as cold and snowy. The new birding year began with a fourth straight month of below normal temperatures. The first nine days averaged about two degrees warmer than normal but colder air then moved in on the 10<sup>th</sup> which began a very cold pattern including several Arctic outbreaks. We had a twenty-one day stretch of below freezing temperatures that didn't end until the last day of the month. The month averaged 19.0 degrees Fahrenheit or 5.5 degrees below normal, making January 2003 the 18<sup>th</sup> coldest since temperature records began in 1871. Snowfall totaled 37.4 inches, more than 11 inches above normal, yet liquid equivalent precipitation was more than 3/4 inch below normal. It was the 17<sup>th</sup> snowiest January since snowfall records began in the winter of 1884-85. At least a trace of snow was recorded on 30 of the 31 days. A -3° reading (all temperatures F) on the 27<sup>th</sup> was the first below zero reading officially in Buffalo since March 8<sup>th</sup> of 1999 and -3° on the 30<sup>th</sup> broke the old record of -1° for that date set back in 1948. Sunshine was sparse again, but not as bad as December: 27 percent of the

tively quiet month for new noteworthy winter species with ten fewer noteworthy records than the previous month. Several records were of species that continued in the region from December.

At least one Eared Grebe continued in Dunkirk Harbor. Also spotted in the harbor was a single Trumpeter Swan, tagged 676. Waterfowl were abundant on the upper Niagara River with large numbers of Canvasbacks off Grand Island and Greater Scaup near the source of the river. Also, the male Harlequin Duck was spotted regularly at Fort Erie around the parking lot north of the marina.

Peter Yoerg continued to monitor the Merlins at the UB South Campus where the birds not only persisted but by the end of the month had increased to as many as eight. Yoerg often observes the birds during the wee hours in the light from the nearby buildings. Fran Rew theorized that the adult female Peregrine Falcon she spotted at Fort Erie might be one from the pair that has nested in Buffalo.

While spishing and playing a tape of the Virginia Rail's grunt calls in the Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area along Meadville Road at the outlet from Cinnamon Marsh, Klick and Harris heard a rail reply. The bird continued calling back for about five minutes and it moved closer to the observers but was never in view. There are only a few winter records of this species in the BOS archives.

The Black-headed Gull continued on the lower Niagara River in the area of the runoff waterfall at Lewiston/Queenston and then at the fly-past at Niagara-on-the-Lake. Gordon Bellerby reports that the fly-past ended January 17<sup>th</sup> when the lower river became clogged with ice. Some observers also noted a

available sunshine was recorded with 31 percent being the norm. Lake Erie began to freeze over during the week of the 13<sup>th</sup> and was mostly ice covered by the 20<sup>th</sup>. The month ended with a fair amount of sunshine on the 31<sup>st</sup> with temperatures finally above freezing again.

January was a rela-

- |    |  |
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2004-2005	Mike Hamilton Tom LeBlanc Mike Morgante

Park in the Town of Porter and Eastern Bluebirds seeking warmth by a heater exhaust in Lockport.

Other interesting reports included these: the first winter, male King Eider reported on Lake Ontario off Fort Niagara was in close to shore east of the main parking lot that overlooks the lake; the Snowy Owl at the Niagara Falls airport was a dark plumaged individual different from the one previously reported at the airport; another Snowy Owl was said to be along Elliott Creek near Indian Run Trail, but no official report was submitted. In the vicinity of the Short-eared Owls along Dickersonville Road in Porter a number of Northern Harriers and a small flock of Snow Buntings were spotted.

dearth of wintering Little Gulls in this vicinity.

Klick and Harris were back at the Iroquois Refuge on January 12<sup>th</sup> where they counted 2397 American Robins in flocks of 3 to 150 birds passing over Sour Springs Road, moving north. The observers admit that the count is low because they missed birds passing overhead while counting birds that could be seen up to a third of a mile on either side. It is likely these robins are part of an even larger roosting flock somewhere in the refuge. The previous high winter count for this species was of 1000 birds also at Iroquois, January 17, 2000. Other wintering thrush reports include a Hermit Thrush on Dietz Road at the east side of Four Mile Creek State



Red-shouldered Hawk

Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna

## Dean Amadon

by Robert F. Andrie

The Buffalo Ornithological Society's last Honorary Member, Dr. Dean Amadon, passed away in January 2003. Dean was a native western New Yorker, born in Franklinville. He was Lamont Curator Emeritus in the Department of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History and was one of the world's leading experts on raptors. For many years he was Chairman of the Museum's Ornithology Department.

A past president of the American Ornithologists' Union, Dean received many honors and was the author of over 400 publications, including three books. He was co-author with Leslie H. Brown of the classic "Hawks, Eagles and Falcons of the World" (1968). With Jean Delacour he wrote the definitive "Curassows and Related Birds" (1973), a magnificent monograph on the natural history and systematics of these great birds, to which I was able to contribute from my studies of the Horned Guan (*Oreophasis derbianus*) in Mexico and Guatemala.

Dean was very helpful to me at all times, especially in supporting these studies and also in studying the gull collection at the Museum. I will always remember him as a close friend and colleague.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Pied-billed Grebe	1; 12	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	5	13; 8	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson; Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	9	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
Horned Grebe	2	1	Olcott	Klick, Harris
"	5	3; 3	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson; Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	4	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	19	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris, Bearss
"	25	4	Dunkirk Harbor	Wojewodski
"	31	5	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles
Red-necked Grebe	9	1	Lewiston Res.	Klick, Sowinski
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	5	1; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson; Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris, Bearss
"	30	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
D.-crested Cormorant	5	96	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	14	62	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	19	91	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris, Bearss
Black-cr. Night-Heron	5	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Klick
Snow Goose	3	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	5	1 blue	Point Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	1 blue	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris, Bearss
"	30	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
Mute Swan	1 - 25	7 records	L.Erie & Ont; Niagara R.	Many observers
<u>Trumpeter Swan</u>	5	1 tagged	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
Tundra Swan	5	3	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	17	8	Fort Erie, Ont.	Watson
"	17; 24	156; 215	Beaver I. SP	Burch
"	27	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	29	16; 27	Grand I; Strawberry I.	Watson
American Black Duck	12	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Northern Pintail	8	1	E. Aurora	Klick, Fuchs
"	17; 18; 20	1; 1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Green-winged Teal	8	1	E. Aurora	Klick, Fuchs
"	12; 17	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Canvasback	15	<u>10350</u>	Grand I.	Burch
"	16	<u>2230</u>	Beaver I. SP	Watson
Redhead	16; 17	6; 76	Beaver I. SP; Ft. Erie	Watson
"	17; 19	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	26	10	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Ring-necked Duck	5	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	9	24	Lewiston Res.	Klick, Sowinski
"	16	2	Beaver I. SP	Watson
"	19	64	Fort Erie, Ont.	Klick, Harris



<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	26	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Greater Scaup	18	<u>3000+</u>	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	19	<u>4750</u>	Fort Erie, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Lesser Scaup	16	14	Beaver I. SP	Watson
"	19	539	Fort Erie, Ont.	Klick, Harris
King Eider	19	1	Fort Niagara	Yoerg, Henderson
Harlequin Duck	17	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	W & D Watson
"	18	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Rew
"	19	1; 1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Wojewodski; Klick, Harris
"	20	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	26	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Surf Scoter	1	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
Long-tailed Duck	17	8	Queenston, Ont.	Watson
"	19	6	Queenston, Ont.	Wojewodski
"	26	5	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Hooded Merganser	3	28	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	14	36	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	5 - 31	7 sightings	Mostly Dunkirk Harbor	Many observers
Ruddy Duck	3	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	5	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
Bald Eagle	13 - 15	6	Grand I.	Burch et al
"	2 - 20	6 sightings	Niagara River	Many observers
Red-shouldered Hawk	20	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Potter, D'Anna
Rough-legged Hawk	31; 31	5; 4	Gerry; Ellington	DeFrancisco
"	12	3	Randolph	DeSha et al
"	19	1	Chippawa, Ont.	Wojewodski
"	19	1	Jamestown	Berry
"	25	1	Hanover	Wojewodski
"	31	1	Porter	S O'Donnell
Merlin	<u>1</u>	1	Tifft NP	Andrle
"	<u>3 - 31</u>	8 max	UB South Campus	Yoerg
"	<u>31</u>	1	Buffalo	Klick
Peregrine Falcon	<u>1</u>	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Rew et al
"	21	2	Buffalo	Yoerg
Virginia Rail	<u>4</u>	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
American Coot	5	48	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	14	140	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
Purple Sandpiper	19	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Klick, Harris
Little Gull	1	1	Lewiston	D'Anna et al
"	1	1	Queenston, Ont.	Rew et al
"	12	1	Lewiston	B & J Horne
"	25; 27	1; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	30	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
"	31	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles
<u>Black-headed Gull</u>	1; 12	1; 1	Lewiston	D'Anna et al
"	14	1	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
"	19	1	Lewiston	Klick, Harris
Bonaparte's Gull	14	1355	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
Iceland Gull	17	1	Adam Beck Hydro	Watson
"	19	6	Lewiston	Klick, Harris
"	25	2	Adam Beck Hydro	Wojewodski



<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Glaucous Gull	1	4	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
"	19	1	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
Snowy Owl	17	1	Niagara	S O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl	17; 30	1; 1	Dunkirk Airport	Rew; Rew, Walker
"	19	15	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	3	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	6	Porter	Andrles
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	1	1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-headed Wdpkr.	5; 30	1; 1	Sturgeon Point	Rew; Rew, Walker
"	9	1	Fort Niagara SP	Klick, Harris
"	30	1	Hamburg	Andrle
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	5	1	Boston	S & T O'Donnell
Northern Shrike	5	1	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	8	1	E. Aurora	Klick, Fuchs
"	19	1	Pomfret	Moshers
"	31	1	Poland	DeFrancisco
Horned Lark	12; 19	13; 120	Shelby; Somerset	S & T O'Donnell
Tufted Titmouse	3	1	Jamestown	Berry
"	5	2	Point Gratiot	Watson
"	19 - 31	1	Lewiston	B & J Horne
Carolina Wren	1 - 20	9 sightings	Throughout WNY	Many observers
Winter Wren	5	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	Niagara Falls	B & J Horne
Eastern Bluebird	5; 19	4; 1	Boston; Porter	S & T O'Donnell
"	19	5	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	2	Sheridan	Andrles
"	31	10	Porter	S O'Donnell
Hermit Thrush	5	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	9	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Klick, Harris
American Robin	12	<u>2397</u>	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	17	170	Queenston, Ont.	Watson
Gray Catbird	1	1	Rock Point PP, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Yellow-r. Warbler	26; 27	1; 1	Lewiston	B & J Horne
Swamp Sparrow	4; 12	3; 1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
"	5	3	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	16	1	Beaver Island SP	Watson
White-cr. Sparrow	16	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Snow Bunting	5	35	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	50	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	2; 120	Somerset; Porter	S & T O'Donnell
"	25	12	Dunkirk Airport	Wojewodski
"	31	45	Dunkirk Airport	Andrles
Red-w. Blackbird	5	1	Beaver I. SP	S & T O'Donnell
Brown-headed Cowbird	5	3; 1	Boston; Beaver I. SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	8	10	Tonawanda	Hess
"	11	1	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
"	16	2	Lewiston	B & J Horne
Purple Finch	12; 18; 21; 22;	7 max	Colden	Wojewodski
"	26			
"	15 - 24	6 max	Franklinville	DeSha
"	15	4	Pomfret	Moshers



Also observed this month: Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Gadwall, Mallard, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, American Goldfinch, and House Sparrow.

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:**

**106**

**Total for the year 2003:**

**106**

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## **William E. Townsend Obituary**

*by Bill Burch*

BOS member Bill Townsend died Sunday, October 13, 2002, in Buffalo General Hospital after a short illness. He was 74. Bill joined the Buffalo Ornithological Society in 1977, gaining Active status in 1983. He was the BOS Treasurer from 1982 to 1987. Bill was an outgoing person and enjoyed greeting new members and making them feel welcome.

At the BOS banquets Bill customarily took the picture of the group. Photography was a lifetime hobby; he joined the Science Museum Camera Club at the age of 15 and continued to support that club and the Museum for over 50 years. Many of his nature photographs were of outstanding quality.

A native of Buffalo, Bill was a graduate of the University of Buffalo. He worked for 30 years as a chemist for Allied Chemical. In 1980 he took a job as safety inspector for New York State, retiring in 1990. He said that his favorite assignment was the inspection of the lifts at ski resorts.

Bill belonged to a rail-fan club, going on many of their train excursions. He blended this with birding by taking the train to Nebraska to view the Sandhill Crane spectacle.

Bill was an avid birder and nature lover, going on many outings with BOS, Tiff Nature Preserve and Buffalo Audubon Society, of which he was also an office-holder. A memento of the BOS owl trip to Amherst Island, Ontario, comes to mind: Upon examining a group photo, we all asked, "Who on earth is that black giant in the back row?" It was Bill, who had

secretly pulled a black hood over his head. Bill liked a joke.

Bill Townsend is survived by many cousins. He was married at one time. The memorial service was held October 21 in St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral. Attending were a number of his BOS friends, as well as relatives and members of his many clubs. He was buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery.

## **Bill Townsend**

*by Gerry Rising*

I am saddened by the unexpected loss of Bill Townsend from the Buffalo Ornithological Society, the Buffalo Audubon Society, the Buffalo Camera Club, the Niagara Frontier Botanical Society and the Buffalo Museum of Science and I am even more saddened by this loss of still another good friend.

I cannot let Bill go without repeating a story he told me on himself. We were riding together to the Bruce Peninsula and Bill sat through that expedition most uncomfortably in the small car I owned at that time.

Reminiscing about his failed marriage, Bill told me of the time I got on a Buffalo Transit bus and took the only available seat next to a woman. As strangers do on a bus, Bill said, they opened a conversation about the weather. But after several minutes Bill finally realized that he was talking to his former wife. He hadn't recognized her.

I laughed so hard it is a wonder we didn't end up in the ditch. I will indeed miss this fine and generous colleague.



The Federation New York State
Waterfowl Count: January 11-19, 2003
by Bill Burch

Introduction. This report gives the results for Region 1 of the Annual Waterfowl Count of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. Region 1, assigned to BOS, consists of the New York part of the BOS study area and includes the Niagara River and adjacent waters of Lakes Erie and Ontario. Census results will be used by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to monitor long-term population changes. Statewide results will be published in the Federation journal, The Kingbird.

Results. The 52,095 individuals counted in 2003 was exceeded only by the 71,801 found in the 2001 count. The 32 species equaled an earlier high. The Eared Grebe, found at Dunkirk Harbor, is a first in our count. The 3962 Buffleheads is another record, achieved mainly by the team spotting a transient flock of 3045 at the ice boom, a rerun of their Bufflehead experience of last year's count. The 133 Hooded Mergansers was a record, doubling the 2002 record. Most of these were found under the piers of Tonawanda Island in the Niagara River. High counts, but not records, were tabulated for Tundra Swan, Greater Scaup and Canvasback. The male Harlequin Duck at Ft. Erie had many observers. Counts of most other species were average.

Table with 3 columns: Species, Number, Comments. Rows include Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Double-cr. Cormorant, Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Black Duck, Mallard, Pintail, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, King Eider, Harlequin Duck.

Table with 3 columns: Species, Count, Comparison. Rows include Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-br. Merganser, Ruddy Duck, American Coot, unidentified, Total Species, Total Individuals.

Discussion. The weather was mainly cold and windy, with snow squalls nearly every day during the January 11-19 count period. For the first three days the daytime temperature would start at 20°F and rise to 28°. After that time it became colder and temperatures would start at 12° and rise to 22°. Much of the time a WSW wind of 12-25 mph caused considerable discomfort.

Lake Ontario remained open, but shore ice extended out a half-mile. Lake Erie was open at our (eastern) end, with shore ice extending out about one-half to one mile. The open water held large flocks at times, too far away to be counted or identified. Dunkirk Harbor had almost the only open water on the Lake Erie south shore, so most of the Section I count came from there.

In the southern tier the Allegheny River was generally open, with patches of floating ice. The Allegheny Reservoir was frozen, as was Chautauqua Lake. The upper Niagara River accumulated shore ice as well as large thin pans of ice, making it unattractive to large flocks. Damage to the ice boom released large blocks of ice which became stranded in the shallows near Beaver Island Park. Ice covered those shallows as far as Strawberry and Motor Islands. There was an ice bridge below Niagara Falls.

In 2002 and 2003 the coverage of the Canadian side of the upper Niagara River (Section F) was improved by having a separate team count the large flocks between the ice boom and the Peace Bridge. This year the NY side of the upper river (Section E) was covered by two teams, the split being at the foot of Sheridan Drive (just N of Strawberry Island).

The 15,447 Greater Scaup were, as usual, found mainly off the Buffalo waterfront and across the river near the ice boom. This is more than the 13,444 found last year, but below the record of 20,957 of 2001. Scaup numbers began increasing sharply in 1999.



During the count period each year practically all the Canvasbacks are found around the periphery of Grand Island, so it pays to repeat counts to seek a maximum. On the first count, January 11, the number was 4100, which seemed low. Some might still have been arriving, and others may have been scattered by the waterfowl hunting season, which had ended three days earlier (even though Canvasbacks are protected). The next count, made on January 15 under favorable conditions, was the best of several, netting 10,350 Canvasbacks, to give a total of 10,406 when added to the sightings of the other teams. Our Region 1 count of Canvasbacks is important because we have most of those found in NY State. In the 2001 statewide survey, for example, we had 88 percent of the total Canvasbacks for the state.

The Tundra Swan count of 169 continues the high swan counts of the past four years. Most of these were on the ice at Beaver Island State Park, at the south end of Grand Island. Other wintering swan counts (outside this count period) there were 287 on December 17, 2002 and 215 on January 24, 2003. Three Mute Swans were seen downstream from Ft. Erie, Ontario.

Six Bald Eagles were seen by waterfowl count participants and reported as the BOS contribution to the DEC Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. Team E found two adults along the Niagara River. Other sightings were at Jaeger Rocks, Grand Island and Navy Island. Considering the high mobility of these wintering birds, we can only be positive about reporting three adults and three immatures to the DEC count. The number is certainly greater than six as a month after the count a group of eight were seen together on the ice on the west side of the Niagara River at Grand Island. Our teams saw no eagles on the lower Niagara River, but DEC personnel saw two there on a different day. Iroquois NWR reported no eagles present, but the Cayuga Pool pair now have returned. Tim Baird of Salamanca, in his survey of the Allegheny River, reported that, for the first time in three or four years, he saw no eagles.

## Territories and Party Leaders

A	Lake Ontario: Point Breeze to Olcott	J. Farrell
B	Lake Ontario: Olcott to Fort Niagara	P. Yoerg
C	Ft. Niagara to base of Niagara Falls (NY)	M. Davis
D	Niagara-on-the-Lake to base of Niagara Falls, Canadian side	M. Zebehazy
E*	Buffalo harbor to Goat Island, NY side	J. Thill
F*	L. Erie to Horseshoe Falls, Canadian side	W. Broderick
G	Grand Island, NY (in the Niagara River)	R. Lipp
H	Lake Erie: Buffalo harbor to Silver Creek	D. Suggs
I	Lake Erie: Silver Creek to, PA state line	F. Rew
J	Jamestown and Chautauqua Lake	R. Sundell
K	Olean and Salamanca	T. Baird
L	Allegany County	B. Burton
M	Batavia	G. Seamans
N	Oak Orchard and Tonawanda	E. Ratajczak
O	Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge	E. Ratajczak
P	Amherst, Clarence, Cheektowaga	W. Burch
Q	Delaware Park, Forest Lawn Cemetery	B. Klick
R	South Park, Cazenovia Park and Creek, West Seneca	J. Landau

\* Note: Leader for parts of E and FG. Rising

**Participants.** The compiler extends his thanks to the BOS members and friends who took part in this annual count: Robert Andrle, Tim Baird, Tom Bearss, Pat Bogan, Bill Broderick, Bill Burch, Olive Burch, Doris Burton, Ken Cohen, David Cooper, Michael DeSha, Michael Davis, Joe DiDomenico, Stephen Eaton, Jerald Farrell, Mike Galas, Douglas Happ, Don Harris, Barbara Henderson, Audrey Horbett, Mary Jordan, Brendan Klick, Jim Landau, Karen Landau, Robert Lipp, Jane Mason, Max Mason, Ed Ratajczak, Frances Rew, Gerry Rising, Vicki Rothman, Dennis Russell, Carmen Scutella, Gail Seamans, Thomas Simmons, David Suggs, Debbie Suggs, Bob Sundell, Joe Thill, Bill Watson, Larry Wilson, Peter Yoerg, Mike Zebehazy.



## Migrating cormorants

Last year approximately 57,000 cormorants nested on Lake Ontario islands in about 22 individual colonies; these same birds will be returning this spring. For several years, I have documented migration of this species with only limited success. I ask New York State birders to assist me in this effort. If you observe "migrant" cormorants PLEASE note the time of day, date, flock size, and location and forward the information to me.

I continue to be amazed that about 50-60,000 cormorants arrive in our area each spring and more than twice that number (>120,000) leave in the autumn yet we know little of their migration. What are their flight routes? How large are migrant flocks? What prompts their arrival and departure? What times of the day do they fly?

If anyone would like to monitor selected locations, *e.g.*, the Niagara River, or any rivers flowing into Lakes Ontario and Erie, please contact me.

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## Color-marked Red-tailed Hawks in Eastern United States and Canada

As part of a HMANA sponsored research project, Red-tailed Hawks have been color-marked with yellow, green, or red (pink) dye. The first 4 secondary feathers are dyed creating a square patch of color along the trailing edge of each wing. If you see one of these birds, please report the following:

Name, Address, Phone, email  
Date and Time (EST)  
Location (State, County, exact locality)  
Age of hawk  
Dye Color  
Behavior of hawk when observed

Send information to:

Dan Kunkle  
Wildlife Information Center  
P.O. Box 198  
Slatington, PA 18080  
610-760-8889  
wildlife@fast.net

## New York State Breeding Bird Atlas

If you are interested in volunteering with the Atlas project contact the Region 1 coordinator Dick Rosche (Email: drosche@juno.com or 652-8409).







**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

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## April – June Calendar

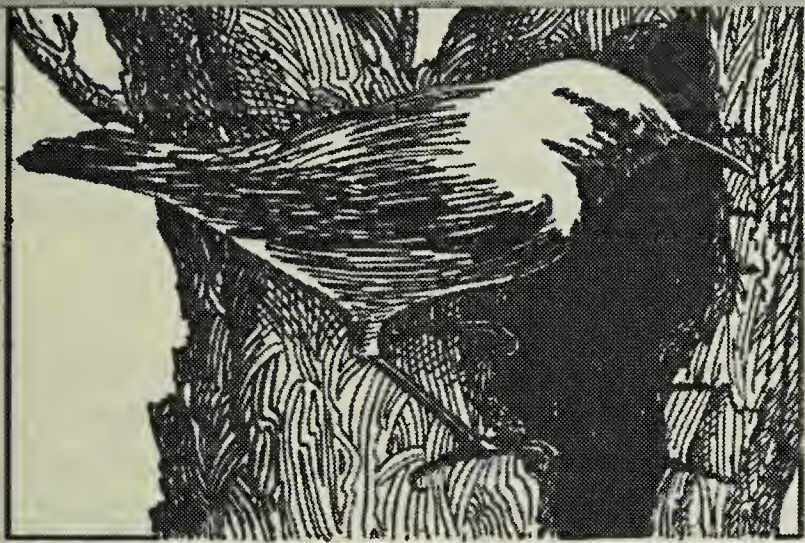
- March 1 - May 10: Hamburg Hawkwatch at Lakeside Memorial Park** in Hamburg (off Camp Rd. bet. Routes 5 & 20). Generally 10 AM - 3 PM weather permitting. Jim Landau (941-3869 or kjlandau@localnet.com).
- April 6: Sunday. Oak Orchard Swamp Field Trip.** Leader: Gail Seamans (585-937-5105 or Gails@netacc.net) Meet 8:00 AM at Cayuga Pool parking lot on Route 77 in Iroquois NWR. Waterfowl & rarities. Invite a friend.
- April 9: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM. Paul T. Schnell of the Inst. for Environmental Learning will discuss Screech Owls.
- April 13: April Count:** Coordinator: Mike Hamilton (881-6709 or mhsr@wzrd.com)
- April 23: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.
- April 27: Sunday. Braddock Bay Trip.** This annual trip to the Hawkwatch will be co-led by Mike Zebehazy (662-6987 or zebs@adelphia.net) and Bob Spahn (GOS). Meet 7 AM at the Tanning Bed on Main and Transit. We will carpool from there. Poor weather may cancel. Call in advance.
- May 4: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach** for warblers. Leader: Bill Bogacki (674-5781). Meet at 7:00 AM at the Tifft N. P. parking lot.
- May 14: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM. Mike Allen of the NYSDEC will present a program on Bald Eagles.
- May 18: May Count.** Coordinator: Robert Deleon (626-0325 or RLDeleon@Yahoo.com)
- May 28: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM.
- June 6: Friday. Canadian Whip-poor-will Trip and Chinese Dinner.** Leader: Bill Burch 773-3690. Meet at Vermont and Busti at 6 p.m. Dinner at Lotus Garden Restaurant (182 West Street – west bank of Welland Canal – Port Colborne, Ont.). Then we go to Wilson Road, four miles w. of town
- Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: February

by Michael Turisk

February 2003 was a not-so-gentle reminder of just how long and harsh a Niagara Frontier winter can be. The average temperature for the month was just 20.8 degrees (temperature in F), 5.1 degrees below normal. Snowfall measured 19.5 inches, which brought the season total to 101.6 inches, 8.6 inches above the norm of 93 inches. Save for several days, bone-chilling temperatures left many a field observer vituperating the North-Atlantic Oscillation and yearning for vernal distraction. *Meteorological data provided by the National Weather Service.*

February's reputation for being the dregs of the birding calendar is often justified, however, there is usually some facet to secure interest, such as the sojourns of incursives or the appearance of some feathered foreigner. Despite the lack of exceptional rarities and the climatic gulag that was, many of our active members shook-off indolence, snubbed "Old Man Winter" and took to field, wood, and shore, where efforts were thus rewarded.

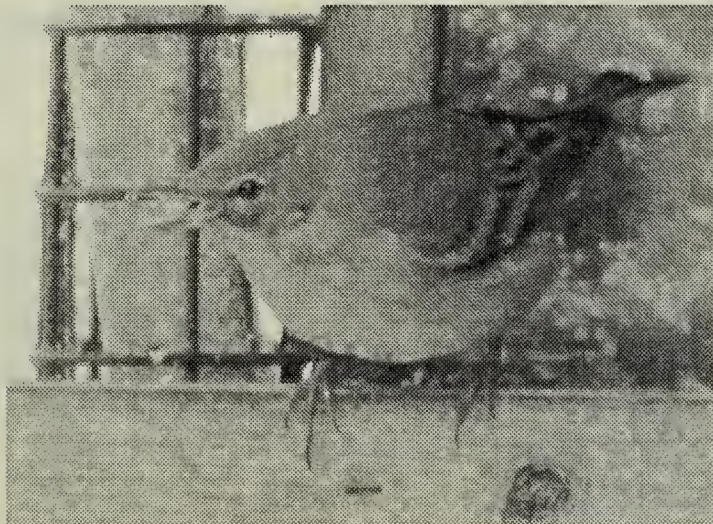
Extended cold snaps can be a limiting factor on waterfowl, specifically with regard to available waters for feeding; however, the hardy observer is often remunerated with concentrations attracted to ice-free waters. Veterans of the Society are well acquainted with Dunkirk Harbor and the effect to which

water-birds are attracted in winter – the harbor acts as a veritable oasis for

waterbirds otherwise frozen out of their previous haunts. A rare-in-winter Eared Grebe spied by Bill Watson at Dunkirk Harbor on February 3 is but one of an array of interesting records to come from this locale in February. Fran Rew spotted what was presumably the same individual on February 8. On Valentine's Day, the Moshers observed 26 Red-necked Grebe and the 2 female Black Scoter observed by Brendan Klick and Don Harris on February 2 added spice to the mix.

Merlin assembled without precedent on the University at Buffalo's Main Street Campus last February. Peter Yoerg observed a remarkable 9 Merlins on four of sixteen days he censused the site during the month! Interestingly, all were "brown-backed" individuals, indicating either female or immature birds. Yoerg has commented in numerous reports on their preferred roosting sites, citing Austrian Pine as the tree species of choice. Indeed, on many evenings this writer noted the presence of at least one Merlin perched atop a favored tree – a particularly large deciduous planting adjacent the Parker Lot. Are Merlin now considered to be ubiquitous at this site from late autumn to early spring?

On February 2, Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter observed and photographed a Pine Warbler at the feeding station of Michelle Coblentz in the Village of Middleport, Niagara County. Michelle initially reported the bird in late November; the available food provided by the feeding station had certainly



Pine Warbler

Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna

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helped this half-hardy survive. D'Anna noted the difficulty in ageing and sexing this individual in his report, but added, "...the tapered rectrix with pointed tip noted in one photo on my computer is indicative of basic I plumage."

Other noteworthy records include 1 Harlequin Duck at Fort Erie, Ontario on February 2, observed by Peter Yoerg, Barb Henderson and Mike Morgante. Red-shouldered Hawk are regularly reported from the Southern Tier (3 reports this month), but was the bird observed by D'Anna and Potter at Hartland, Niagara County on February 22, a day with heavy precipitation and strong north-east winds, an overwintering bird or a migrant? Although more common than

records indicate, records of Northern Saw-whet Owl are always interesting – 3 reports were received for February. The heavy tangles, extensive evergreens and numerous fruit-bearing shrubs at Four Mile Creek S.P. offer excellent wintering habitat for Hermit Thrush, so 2 birds reported there on February 17 by Don Harris is not unexpected, but nonetheless noteworthy.



American Pipit

Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna

## No More Owls

by Gerry Rising

The day after Paul Schnell's excellent BOS presentation about screech owls, I came across a passage in Diane Ravitch's new book, *The Language Police*, that might interest Paul and others. The book is about textbook and test censorship that has become universal in this country. And here is one of her examples of a rejected story:

"The passage about owls was like a children's encyclopedia entry. It described how their keen eyesight and hearing enabled them to hunt at night for rodents. When I saw that this passage was rejected, I imagined that it was because of the violence associated with hunting (although that's how owls survive). I was wrong. The passage was rejected because a Native American member of the bias committee said that owls are taboo for the Navajos. Consequently the entire committee agreed that the passage should be dropped. The test publisher added a notation that the owl is associated with death in some other cultures and should not be mentioned anymore, neither in texts nor in illustrations.

"Here is a classic problem presented by today's bias and sensitivity review process. If any cultural group attributes negative connotations to anything, or considers it taboo or offensive, then that topic will not be referred to, represented, described, or illustrated on tests. But owls exist. They are real birds. They are not creatures of the imagination. Nevertheless, to avoid giving offense, the tests will pretend that owls don't exist. Owls are to be deleted and never again mentioned to the highly vulnerable and sensitive American schoolchild."

Ms. Ravitch describes this as "beneficent censorship," well-meaning but misguided. I would use stronger adjectives that clearly wouldn't make today's textbooks.

## BOS–Niagara County Owl Field Trip February 23, 2002

Chuck Rosenberg led a successful owl trip in western Niagara County. The trip list included four Short-eared Owls in Wheatfield, a Great Horned Owl at Joseph Davis State Park, and a Long-eared Owl at Wilson-Tuscarora State Park.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Pied-billed Grebe	2	5	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	3	8	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	22	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Horned Grebe	2	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	3	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
Red-necked Grebe	14	26	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	3	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	8	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
D.-crested Cormorant	2	101	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	3	108	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
Great Blue Heron	1	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles
"	28	1	Falconer	DeFrancisco
Mute Swan	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	3	1	Point Gratiot	Watson
"	8; 20	1; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew; Rew, Walker
"	16	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
Tundra Swan	2	8	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	2	15	Strawberry I.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14; 28	57; 91	Beaver I. SP	Hess
"	15	266; 200	Fort Erie, Ont.	Andrles; Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	47	Motor I.	Watson
"	20; 21	195; 25	Beaver I. SP; Eggertsville	Burch; Suggs
Gadwall	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
*American Wigeon	8	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
American Black Duck	1; 20	6; 1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	3	3	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	22	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Northern Pintail	1; 6; 20	1; 1; 1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	8	3	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
Green-winged Teal	6; 20	1; 1	East Aurora	Holmes
Canvasback	22	100	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Redhead	7; 19	5; 14	Tonawanda; Niawanda P.	Watson
"	8	1	Williamsville	Morgante
"	22	25	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Ring-necked Duck	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	2	1	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	7; 19	1; 5	Tonawanda; Motor I.	Watson
"	22	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Greater Scaup	2	8000	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
Lesser Scaup	2	32	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	2	100	Buffalo Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	2	30	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
Harlequin Duck	2	1	Buffalo Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	2	1	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	15	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Andrles
Surf Scoter	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	8	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
"	16	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
White-winged Scoter	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	3; 19	1; 6	Dunkirk Harbor; Olcott	Watson
"	7	22	Fort Niagara SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	15	8	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16; 17	5; 6	Dunkirk Harbor; Porter	Moshers; Klick, Harris
"	27	6	Lewiston	S & T O'Donnell
* <u>Black Scoter</u>	2	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	5	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
Long-tailed Duck	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	3	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	17	318	Lewiston	Klick, Harris
*Common Goldeneye	16	350	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
Hooded Merganser	2	2	Fort Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	3	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
"	7	13	North Tonawanda	Watson
"	22	18	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Common Merganser	16	500	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	19	300	Motor I.	Watson
Red-br. Merganser	2	3000	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
Bald Eagle	2	1 imm.	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird
"	2	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Rew, Horbett
"	2	1 ad., 2 imm.	Buffalo Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	2; 19	1; 1 imm.	Buffalo Harbor; Olcott	Morgante; Watson
"	14; 15	1 ad., 2 imm.; 1	Beaver I. SP; Strawberry I.	Hess; Andrles
"	15	2; 4	Buffalo Harbor; Navy I.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16; 27	1 ad.; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers, Andrles; Rew
"	17	1	Lewiston	Klick, Harris
"	17	2; 1	Lewiston; F. Niagara SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	20	2 ad., 5 imm.	Grand Island	Burch
Northern Harrier	8	8	Porter	S & T O'Donnell
"	17	8	Porter	Klick, Harris
Red-shouldered Hawk	10	2	Jamestown	Berry
"	19	1	Ripley	DeFrancisco
"	22	1	Hartland	Potter, D'Anna
"	28	1	Falconer	DeFrancisco
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1; 8; 20	Porter	S & T O'Donnell
"	16	1	Wheatfield	S & T O'Donnell
"	19	4	Ripley & Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	20	5	South Dayton	Rew, Walker
<u>Merlin</u>	3 - 28	9 max	UB South Campus	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7	8 max	UB South Campus	Watson
<u>Peregrine Falcon</u>	2	2	Downtown Buffalo	Yoerg, Henderson
Little Gull	1	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	1	1	Queenston	Bellerby
"	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Klick, Harris
"	17	1	Lewiston	Klick, Harris
"	23	3	Lewiston	Watson, Rosenberg (BOS)
Iceland Gull	20	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
Glaucous Gull	2	1	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	15	1	Fort Erie, Ont.	Andrles
*Eastern Screech-Owl	21	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Great Horned Owl	1; 20	3; 1	Pomfret	Moshers
"	1 - 28	1 (at nest)	Joseph Davis SP	S & T O'Donnell
*Long-eared Owl	21	2	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	23	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Galas, Bogan (BOS)
Short-eared Owl	15	3	Wheatfield	D'Anna



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	21	5	Royalton	Klick
"	23	4	Wheatfield	Watson, Rosenberg (BOS)
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	2	1	Mt. Pleasant SF	Klick, Harris
"	9	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Potter, D'Anna
"	17	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Klick, Harris
Northern Shrike	1	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	17	1	Pomfret	Moshers
"	17	1	Somerset	S & T O'Donnell
"	19	1	Ripley	DeFrancisco
*Common Raven	2	1	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird
"	5	1	Franklinville	DeSha
Horned Lark	9	50	Somerset & Yates	Yoerg, Henderson
* <i>E. d. alpestris</i>	9	2	Somerset & Yates	Yoerg, Henderson
Horned Lark	19	70	Somerset	Watson
"	22	12	Pomfret	Mosher
Tufted Titmouse	3	2	Point Gratiot	Watson
"	20	2	Chippawa	Bellerby
"	22	1	Jamestown	Berry
Carolina Wren	1 - 28	1	Eden Valley	Andrles
"	1 - 28	2	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	2	1	Point Gratiot	Klick, Harris
Eastern Bluebird	2	2	Stevensville, Ont.	Rew, Horbett
"	6; 20	1; 6	East Aurora	Holmes
"	19	8; 4	Wilson; Somerset	Watson
"	22	4	Pomfret	Berry
Hermit Thrush	17	1; 2	Four Mile Cr. SP; Porter	Klick, Harris
American Robin	19	23	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	22	147	Pomfret	Berry
"	27	175	Bond Lake Park	Roberson
Northern Mockingbird	14; 15	1; 1	Niagara Falls	Roberson
"	15	1	South Park, Bflo.	Andrles
"	19	1	Ripley	DeFrancisco
"	22	1	Hartland	Potter, D'Anna
"	23	1	Lewiston	Watson, Rosenberg BOS
Yellow-r. Warbler	2	2	Lake Erie SP	Klick, Harris
* <u>Pine Warbler</u>	2	1	Middleport	D'Anna, Potter
*Eastern Towhee	27	1	Bond Lake Park	Roberson
Swamp Sparrow	1 - 28	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrles
White-thr. Sparrow	1; 16	4; 1	Porter; Niagara Falls	S & T O'Donnell
"	6; 7; 18	1; 1; 1	Tonawanda	Watson
"	19	2	Tifft NP	Watson
"	27	4	Bond Lake Park	Roberson
*Lapland Longspur	2	1	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	2; 22	2; 1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
"	9	5	Somerset	Yoerg, Hendsen
Snow Bunting	2; 22	225; 250	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
"	2	350	Oakfield	S & T O'Donnell
"	19	30	Somerset	Watson
Red-w. Blackbird	2	1	Oakfield	S & T O'Donnell
"	28	1	Tonawanda	Watson
*Rusty Blackbird	9	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	2	Tonawanda	Watson
"	7 - 28	20	Tonawanda	Hess
"	22	20	Pomfret	Berry
Purple Finch	2	8	Lake Erie SP	Klick, Harris
"	5;12;22;25	3; 6; 7; 6	Franklinville	DeSha

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded: 106**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue: 10**

**Total for the year 2003: 116**





**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 1020 Humboldt Parkway  
 Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## April – July Calendar

- March 1 - May 10: Hamburg Hawkwatch at Lakeside Memorial Park** in Hamburg (off Camp Rd. bet. Routes 5 & 20). Generally 10 AM - 3 PM weather permitting. Jim Landau (941-3869 or kjlandau@localnet.com).
- April 27: Sunday. Braddock Bay Trip.** This annual trip to the Hawkwatch will be co-led by Mike Zebehazy (662-6987 or zebs@adelphia.net) and Bob Spahn (GOS). Meet 7 AM at the Tanning Bed on Main and Transit. We will carpool from there. Poor weather may cancel. Call in advance.
- May 4: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach** for warblers. Half-day. Leader: Bill Bogacki (674-5781). Meet 7:00 AM at Tifft N. P. parking lot.
- May 14: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM. Mike Allen of the NYSDEC will present a program on Bald Eagles.
- May 18: May Count.** Coordinator: Robert Deleon (626-0325 or RLDeleon@yahoo.com)
- May 28: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM. Mike Hamilton will discuss the April Count results.
- May 30-June 1 Allegany Nature Pilgrimage** <http://www.alleganynaturepilgrimage.org/index.htm> or call Tony or Marcia Wagner at 716-754-4231.
- June 6: Friday. Canadian Whip-poor-will Trip and Chinese Dinner.** Leader: Bill Burch 773-3690. Meet at Vermont and Busti at 6 p.m. Dinner at Lotus Garden Restaurant (182 West Street – west bank of Welland Canal – Port Colborne, Ont.). Then we go to Wilson Road, four miles w. of town.
- June 12: BOS Picnic at Tifft Nature Preserve.** 6:30 PM
- July 27: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.
- Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 69, No. 4 April, 2003

### THE MONTH: March

*by Robert Wagner*

The comeback of the Bald Eagle was dramatized this March with three nestings. A nest visible from the Cayuga Pool Overlook along Route 77 at the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge is monitored by a camera, which has, as of this writing, recorded the production of three eaglets. Progress at a second nest, in the woods behind Mohawk Pond, was obscured behind a heavy growth of trees, but all appeared to be going well, according to Dorothy Gerhart, a planner with the refuge. The third nest is on the state's Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area. It is visible from the Albion Road near Windmill Marsh. Sunny Knowlton, a state wildlife technician, said, "We can't tell for sure but we think there has been a hatching."

This may presage the most successful year in the federal-state program to re-establish the Bald Eagle in the region. It began with the "hacking" in artificial nests of 42 young eagles from Alaska at Oak Orchard in the early '80s. Two of the hacked birds showed up at the Iroquois refuge to raise two eaglets in 1986. But progress over the years has been uneven. Sometimes eggs didn't hatch. An eaglet was accidentally killed by an adult. A nesting tree blew down in a storm. And last year both the Mohawk nest and Cayuga nests were blown out of the trees during high winds in March, although the Cayuga pair managed to raise a brood successfully from a rebuilt nest.

Hacking programs were first used to restore another endangered raptor, the Peregrine Falcon. The success of that program is dramatized with the renewed nesting in March of pair of them in

a 17th floor window alcove below the roof of the Statler Hilton Building in downtown Buffalo. The Buffalo Ornithological Society, state Department of Environmental Conservation, Buffalo Audubon Society and Northstar Development sponsor a video monitoring of the nesting. It can be viewed from the street from a Statler window front, or from the Statler lobby, as well as on the web site <[www.birdlink.info/bird-cam/](http://www.birdlink.info/bird-cam/)>.

Renewed nesting of a second pair of Peregrine Falcons near the Cave of the Winds at Niagara Falls was reported by a spokeswoman for the Cave of the Winds Office at Niagara Reservation Park, although it had not been confirmed, as of this writing, by the DEC.

A Peregrine Falcon also turned up at the South Campus of the University at Buffalo, reports Peter Yeorg, who regularly checks the UB grounds for the wintering Merlins that have been roosting there in recent years. He reported eight, and possibly nine Merlins, in early March, dwindling to two by the end of the month. The last Merlin was seen on April 10.

The Peregrine Falcon, which appeared to be an adult female and was unbanded (unlike the downtown birds), was observed through most of the month and last seen on April 3, Yoerg reports. He said it appeared to spend much of its time perched at the smokestack of the campus heating plant near Winspear Avenue. On one occasion it was seen eating a rock dove.

Other notable records include a Black Vulture reported by Mike Morgante on March 17 at a Hawk-watch in the Town of Westfield in Chautauqua County. It was in a "kettle with 20 turkey vultures." It was smaller than the other vultures and "held its wings nearly flat," and all black "except for whitish-grayish

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patches on the wind tips."

Brendan Klick and Don Harris reported a Sandhill Crane on March 23 flying over Goat Island at Niagara Falls.

Jim Berry of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute at Jamestown reported that a dead Barn Owl, found March 19 in a yard in the Town of Villanova, in Chautauqua County, was turned in to the institute by Anna Colvin, who suspected the owl had collided with a dog-run wire that extended across the yard. A second decomposing barn owl reportedly was found by Marilyn Gleason in a snow bank at the base of her dairy barn in Chautauqua County.

The prolonging of a frigid winter seemed to delay the annual invasion of waterfowl at

the federal and state refuges, where the waters were still frozen through the early part of the month. Paul Hess, biologist at the Iroquois refuge, said the arrival of Tundra Swans was particularly delayed and he believed that many swans bypassed the refuge because of the ice. Klick and Harris recorded 1,045 Tundra Swans at the Hamburg Hawkwatch on March 16. William Burch, reported 232 wintering Tundra Swans along the Niagara River at Beaver Island on March 7. Their numbers had dwindled to five by the 24th and to four by the 26th.

According to the National Weather Service at Buffalo March was "a true Jekyll and Hyde month in Western New York."

"Unusually persistent cold of the long winter" continued unabated through the first two weeks, but this gave way to a drastic and sudden turnaround to spring-like warmth for the month's second half. These two

weather patterns balanced out nearly perfectly, making March almost exactly normal in regard to temperature. Precipitation and sunshine were close to normal as well, but little snow fell during the month.

The monthly temperature of 33.5 °F was less than a degree colder than the normal 34.3°, but enough to make this Buffalo's sixth consecutive cold month in the longest such stretch since the 7-month period from November 1995 through May 1996.

"The cold was most intense on the 3rd, when Buffalo had its coldest March daytime temperature in 118 years. The mercury peaked at just 6° after setting a new record minimum of -3°. Conversely, the later warm spell was capped off by a June-like 73° on the 28th, although cold returned for the month's final two days."

## Brown-headed Cowbird Project

by Bill Watson

The Research Committee of the Buffalo Ornithological Society (BOS) continues to solicit documentation (see attached form) of cowbird parasitism in our study area. This is a regional study, coincident with the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas project. Although this effort is young, already new information regarding the Brown-headed Cowbird has emerged.

Beardslee and Mitchell, 1965 in *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region* list 51 host species for Brown-headed Cowbird. From our preliminary data (2000-2002) two others have been identified: House Finch and Blue-winged Warbler. A House Finch was observed being pursued by a fledgling Brown-headed Cowbird in the Shadigee parking lot in the Town of Yates, Orleans County, on June 13, 2002. A Blue-winged Warbler nest discovered on May 20, 2001 by Doug Beattie and Tad Gerace contained three warbler and one Brown-headed Cowbird eggs, two other warbler eggs were found outside the nest.

From our preliminary data, the range of cowbird fledgling dates (June 11 - August 18) is new information for our region while the range of egg dates (May 20 - July 2) is within those previously published (April 27 - July 31; Beardslee and Mitchell, 1965) and the New York State range (April 23 - July 31; Andrie and Carroll 1988). No nestling data has yet been received.

Beardslee and Mitchell, 1965 does not contain fledgling dates for Brown-headed Cowbird while this study's preliminary data already contains twenty datum points over the range of June 11 - August 18.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	23	12	Yates	Klick, Harris
"	23	3; 1	Four Mile Creek SP; Wilson-Tusc. SP	D'Anna
Common Loon	23	2	Yates	Klick, Harris
"	24	1	Grand I.	Burch
"	30 (F)	1	Machias	DeSha
Pied-billed Grebe	23	1	Wilson-Tusc. SP	D'Anna
"	28	1	Niagara Falls	Roberson
"	31 (F)	4	Machias	DeSha
Horned Grebe	26 (F)	5	Lyndon	DeSha
"	26	2	East Aurora	Holmes
Red-necked Grebe	1	44; 9	Fort Erie; Navy I.	D'Anna et al
"	2; 8	34; 114	Ft. Erie; Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles
"	4; 24	29; 3	Ft. Erie; Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	8	1	Wilson	D'Anna
"	16	38	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
"	26	2	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	28	2	Tifft NP	Watson
"	29	5; 29	Somerset; Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
D.-crested Cormorant	16	150	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Great Blue Heron	19; 24; 27	30; 67; 77	Motor I.	Watson
Great Egret (nw)	27	3	Motor I.	Burch
Black-cr. Night-Heron	23	8	Goat I.	Klick, Harris
"	24; 27	69; 111	Motor I.	Burch
* <u>Black Vulture</u>	17 (F)	1	Ripley	Morgante
* <u>Turkey Vulture</u>	8 (F)	1	Farnham	Andrles
"	15; 16	4; 5	East Aurora	Holmes
"	17	336	Ripley	Morgante
"	28	1109	Hamburg	Yoerg, Hamilton et al
Snow Goose	2	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles
"	15	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	16; 16; 22	2; 1; 2	Somerset; Yates; Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
"	23	21; 3; 2	Yates; Hartland; Wilson	Klick, Harris
Mute Swan	1	8	Fort Erie	D'Anna et al
"	4; 24	14; 2	Ft. Erie; Motor I.	Watson
"	24; 27	8; 5	Grand I.	Burch
"	30	4	Beaver I. SP	Hess
Tundra Swan	4; 15	34; 58	Ft. Erie; Hamburg	Watson; Watson et al
"	7; 24	232; 5	Beaver I. SP	Burch
"	11; 16	900; 10	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
"	14; 19; 26	100; 53; 4	Beaver I. SP	Hess



<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
..	15	32; 48	East Aurora	Holmes
..	16	1045	Hamburg	Klick, Harris
..	19; 20	122; 93	Motor I.	Watson
*Wood Duck	16 (F)	7	Golden Hill SP	D'Anna
..	20; 21	2; 11	Tifft NP; Newstead	Watson
*Blue-winged Teal	23 (F); 26	6; 4	Dayton; Lyndon	DeSha
..	28	2	Tifft NP	Watson
*Northern Shoveler	16 (F)	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
..	21; 28	4; 1	Newstead; Tifft NP	Watson
Canvasback	7; 24	3645; 300	Grand I.	Burch
Ring-necked Duck	21; 31	38; 102	Newstead; Iroquois NWR	Watson
Greater Scaup	16	20	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
..	28	150	Niagara River	Roberson
Lesser Scaup	23	1	Newstead	Klick, Harris
..	31	37	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Surf Scoter	23	1	Wilson-Tusc. SP	D'Anna
White-winged Scoter	8	5	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles
Black Scoter	16 (L)	1	Olcott	D'Anna
Long-tailed Duck	16	41	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
..	29; 30	6; 1	Allegany SP; Machias	DeSha
Ruddy Duck	23 (F)	2	Newstead	Klick, Harris
..	30; 31	4; 83	Newstead; Batavia WWTP	Watson
Bald Eagle	1	3; 2; 1	Strawberry I.; Grand I.: Motor I.	Watson
..	1	5	Niagara Falls to Buffalo	D'Anna et al
..	2	5	Grand I., Niagara River	Andrles
..	7; 24	2; 1	Grand I.	Burch
..	8; 17; 21	4; 1; 2	Iroquois NWR	Watson
..	8	2	Allegheny Reservoir	Yoerg, Henderson
..	14; 17	1; 1	Oak Orchard WMA; Allegheny Res.	Watson
..	16	1	Gerry	Berry
..	17	1	Ripley	Morgante
..	17	1	Hamburg	Klick et al
..	30	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Harrier	8	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
..	16	1	Ellery	Berry
..	28	5	Hamburg	Yoerg, Hamilton et al
*Northern Goshawk	<u>22</u> (F)	1; 1	Yates; Golden Hill SP	D'Anna; D'Anna, Potter
..	31	1	Jamestown	Berry
Red-shouldered Hawk	15; 22	3; 17	Hamburg	Watson et al
..	16; 21	2; 1	Ward	Brooks
..	16	1	East Aurora	Holmes
..	17	9	Pomfret	Moshers
..	17	23	Ripley	Morgante
..	23	1	Busti	Berry
..	23	1	Carlton	Klick, Harris
..	28	7	Hamburg	Yoerg, Hamilton et al
Rough-legged Hawk	11	1	Busti	Berry
..	15	1	Hamburg	Watson et al
..	17	1	Allen	Brooks



<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
..	17	2	Ripley	Morgante
..	17	2	Hamburg	Klick et al
..	23	1	Yates	Klick, Harris
..	30	1	Farmersville	DeSha
Merlin	16	1	Hamburg	Klick, Harris
Peregrine Falcon	11; 28	2; 2	Buffalo	Burch
..	28	1	Hamburg	Yoerg, Hamilton et al
..	28	2	Buffalo	Yoerg
* <u>Sandhill Crane</u>	23 (F)	1	Goat I.	Klick, Harris
*Killdeer	6 (F)	1	Fredonia	Mosher
..	15; 17	1; 5	Hamburg; Clarence	Watson et al; Watson
*Greater Yellowlegs	31 (F)	5	Iroquois NWR	Watson
*Pectoral Sandpiper	15 (F)	1	Pomfret	Mosher
..	29	25	Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
*Common Snipe	20 (F)	10	Pomfret	Mosher
..	23	1; 1	Iroquois NWR; Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
*American Woodcock	19 (F)	1; 1	Pt. Gratiot; Lake Erie SP	Klick
Little Gull	23	33	Lewiston	Klick, Harris
..	24; 26	3; 7	Queenston; Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
Bonaparte's Gull	26; 31	2680; 325	Queenston; Niag.-on-the-Lake	Bellerby
*Lesser Black-b. Gull	1	1	Fort Erie	Potter et al
..	23	1	Goat I.	Klick, Harris
Glaucous Gull	23	1	Goat I.	Klick, Harris
Short-eared Owl	1; 23	1; 1	Iroquois NWR; Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	1; 15; 23	7; 1; 1	Iroquois NWR; Ridge-way; Oakfield	Klick, Harris
..	8; 16; 23	2; 3; 1	Wilson-Tusc. SP	Potter
..	8	1	Golden hill SP	Potter
Belted Kingfisher	27	1	Forest Lawn Cem.	Hess
Red-headed Wdpkr.	2	1; 1	Beaver I. SP; Hamburg	Andrle
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	22	1	Westfield	Morgante
*Eastern Phoebe	16 (F); 28	1; 3	Tifft NP	Watson
..	16 (F)	1	Pomfret	Moshers
..	17	2	Westfield	Morgante
Northern Shrike	2	1	Busti	Berry
..	8	1	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
..	16; 29	1; 1	Somerset; Hartland	Potter, D'Anna; D'Anna
Red-eyed Vireo	23	15	Harmony	Berry
Common Raven	8	3	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
..	18	2	Alfred	Brooks
Horned Lark	4	75	Eden	Andrle
E. a. alpestris	8	17	Eden	Andrle
*Tree Swallow	21 (F); 28	1; 30	Iroquois NWR; Tifft NP	Watson
..	24	2	Hamburg	Andrle
Barn Swallow (nw)	29 (F)	1	Somerset	D'Anna (BOS)
Carolina Wren	1 - 31	1	Eden Valley	Andrle
..	14; 16	1; 3	Salamanca; Tifft NP	Watson
..	15	1	Cheektowaga	Morgante
..	19	1; 1	Pt. Gratiot; Lake Erie SP	Klick



<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
..	20; 28	1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson
..	23	1; 1	Four Mile Creek SP; Buckhorn I. SP	Klick, Harris
..	30	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Hess
Winter Wren	28	2	Tifft NP	Watson
..	29	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Golden-cr. Kinglet	27 (F)	5	Wilson-Tusc. SP	Potter
..	28	3	Tifft NP	Watson
..	28	6	Niagara River	Roberson
Eastern Bluebird	17	6	Westfield	Morgante
..	19; 28	2; 3	Hume; Grove, Granger	Brooks
Hermit Thrush	23	1	Porter	Klick, Harris
Northern Mockingbird	17	4	Niagara County	Burch
..	28	1	Hamburg	Yoerg, Hamilton et al
*American Pipit	8 (F)	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
..	17	85	Westfield	Morgante
..	28	20	Hamburg	Yoerg, Hamilton et al
Yellow-r. Warbler	19	1	Pomfret	Klick
..	29	4	Somerset	D'Anna (BOS)
Amer. Tree Sparrow	14	1	Alfred	Brooks
*Chipping Sparrow	27 (F)	1	Eden Valley	Andrle
*Vesper Sparrow	29 (F)	2	Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
*Savannah Sparrow	29 (F)	1	Somerset	D'Anna, Pawlicki
*Fox Sparrow	18 (F)	1	Franklinville	DeSha
..	28	2	Tifft NP	Watson
..	28	2	Hamburg	Yoerg
..	31	1	Pomfret	Moshers
Swamp Sparrow	1 - 26	1	Eden Valley	Andrle
White-thr. Sparrow	20	5	Tifft NP	Watson
..	28	1	Goat I.	Roberson
Lapland Longspur	8	4	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
..	17	1	Westfield	Morgante
Snow Bunting	8	300	Yates	D'Anna, Potter
*Eastern Meadowlark	16 (F)	1; 1	Somerset; Yates	D'Anna, Potter; D'Anna
..	17	2	Westfield	Morgante
..	17	4	Hamburg	Klick
Rusty Blackbird	8; 31	1; 2	Tonawanda WMA; Bata- via WWTP	Watson
..	16	4	Pomfret	Moshers
..	17	6	Westfield	Morgante
..	17	17	Hamburg	Klick
*Common Grackle	8 (F)	1	Tonawanda	Hess
..	13	7	Tonawanda	Watson
Brown-headed Cowbird	9	5	Wheatfield	D'Anna, Potter
..	17	8	Hamburg	Klick
Purple Finch	22	1	Westfield	Morgante
..	27	1	Alfred	Brooks
*Red Crossbill	23; 26	1; 1	Alfred	Brooks

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded: 106**

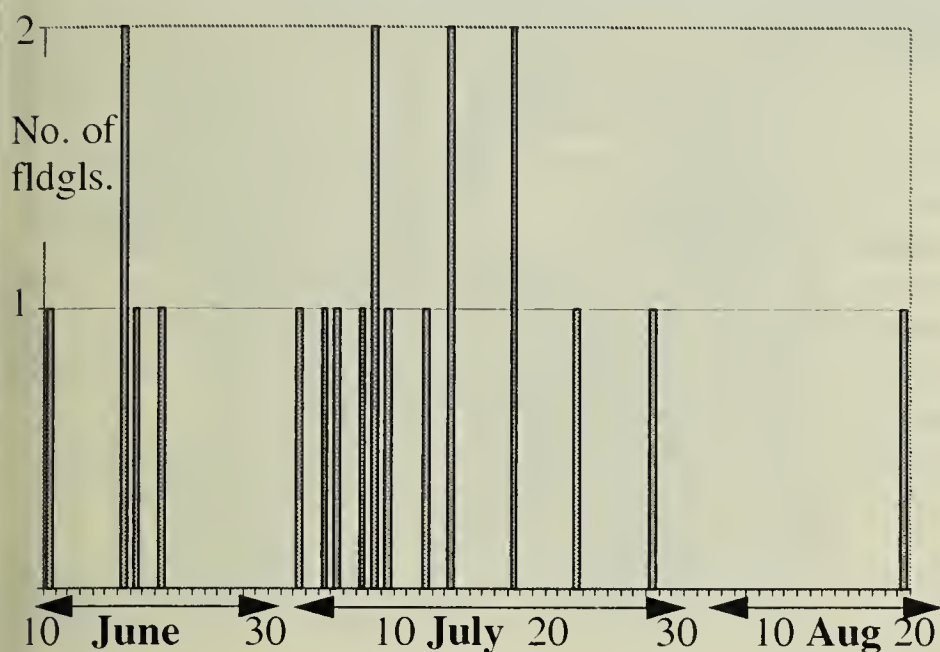
**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue: 10**

**Total for the year 2003: 116**

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.



The distribution of twenty cowbird fledgling dates is shown in the bar graph below. The median date is



July 7 and 50% of the cowbird fledglings were observed between the dates, July 1-13, inclusive.

Twelve host species have been identified: Yellow Warbler (7), Song Sparrow (3), Red-eyed Vireo (2), Common Yellowthroat (2), Chipping Sparrow (2), Eastern Phoebe (1), Blue-headed Vireo (1), Blue-winged Warbler (1), Chestnut-sided Warbler (1), Indigo Bunting (1), Red-winged Blackbird (1), and House Finch (1). The counties represented and number of occurrences: Erie County (9), Niagara County (7), Orleans County (3), Chautauqua County (2), Genesee County (1), and Wyoming County (1). We are looking forward to receiving reports from Canada and Cattaraugus County.

**What should be Reported?**

We are interested in all past records of Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism. So please, dust off those old records and report them using the form at the end of this article.

We are especially interested in data collected during NYSBBA 2000. One of our objectives is to measure the percentage of the different host species parasitized by cowbirds. The accuracy of these numbers relies upon reporting (1) **ALL** incidents of parasitism and to (2) preparing written notes (or records) in the field. Your help with this project will be greatly appreciated.

Thanks to the following contributors to this project: Douglas Beattie, Robert Deleon, Sarah Lazazzero, Frances Rew, Mark Schlacter, and Bill Watson.

**BOS Official Cowbird Coupon**

- Host species \_\_\_\_\_
- Nature of Parasitism, such as egg in nest, feeding young, etc.
- Location: (BBA block, county, detailed location)
- Date of observation \_\_\_\_\_
- Habitat (field, edge, scrub, woodland, plantation,...etc) If the observation was in a woodland estimate the distance to the "edge" habitat.
- Indicate method you used in recording this data. Check one.  
☐ I obtained this data by recording all Brown-headed Cowbird observations in a field journal.  
☐ I took this information from my Breeding Bird Atlas Field Card that I carry when Atlasing.  
☐ Not sure. The year I made this observation I used both methods of Atlasing.  
 please estimate: \_\_\_\_% time using journal \_\_\_\_% time using card  
☐ Data was collected before the Atlasing period during which time I recorded all instances of cowbird parasitism  
☐ Data was collected before the Atlasing period during which time I recorded only selected instances of cowbird parasitism.  
 comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name, address, and telephone number of observer.
- Remarks (if any)

All reports of Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism should be sent to: Bill Watson 771 Fletcher Street Tonawanda, New York 14150  
 (If you are not sure how to fill out any of the questions on the Official Cowbird Coupon please call the **Official Cowbird Coupon Help Line at 695-2820.**)





## June – July Calendar

**May 28: BOS Meeting** at the Buffalo Museum of Science, 7:30 PM. Dr. Wayne Gall will speak on the subject of West Nile Virus and its impact on WNY. Michael Hamilton will update us on the results of the April Count.

**May 30-June 1 Allegany Nature Pilgrimage** <http://www.alleganynaturepilgrimage.org/index.htm> or call Tony or Marcia Wagner at 716-754-4231.

**June 6: Friday. Canadian Whip-poor-will Trip and Chinese Dinner.**

Leader: Bill Burch 773-3690. Meet at Vermont and Busti at 6 p.m. Dinner at Lotus Garden Restaurant (182 West Street - west bank of Welland Canal - Port Colborne, Ont.). Then we go to Wilson Road, four miles w. of town.

**June 11: BOS Picnic at Tifft Nature Preserve.** 6:30 PM

**July 27: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

**Buffalo-Niagara Region  
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# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: April

by Bill Watson

April 2003 was the driest April in 68 years with only 0.90 inches of precipitation, 2.14 inches below normal. April snowfall totaled a near average 3.1 inches, and the winter season ended with an above average total of 111.3 inches that covered the ground for 106 days, the third most in the 60 years of airport records. The unusually cold and snowy winter extended well into April, making conditions difficult for most wildlife in Western New York.

The average temperature was 43.0 F (all temperatures in Fahrenheit), 2.3 degrees below normal, making it the coldest April in six years. It was the sixth consecutive month with below average temperature. The first third of the month averaged ten degrees below normal, while the remaining two-thirds averaged two degrees above normal. The cool temperatures and unusually dry weather placed vegetation about a week behind schedule.

These conditions resulted in only nine warbler species in April: Nashville, Yellow, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Pine, Palm, and Black-and-white Warblers, and Louisiana Waterthrush. Although this is the lowest number of warbler species

predated by two April 28th records: Lowe at Beaverdams, Ontario (1956) and Betsy Potter at Lewiston Twp. (1990). A Black-throated Green Warbler documented by Mike Morgante on April 19 at Goat Island is the third earliest, verified record in the BOS archives.

The House Wren discovered on the 2003 April Count is a new early record. It was found in the Town of Bethany on the east side of Francis Road by Doug Beattie and Tad Gerace. This record eclipses the previous early record of April 14th shared by Donna DeLeon at Tillman Road State WMA and Betsy Brooks in Alfred. Doug wrote that the House Wren was "larger than a Winter Wren and smaller than a Carolina Wren. Tail was upright with no strong markings and was more than half the length of the remainder of the body...faint cream colored eye ring and eye line..."

The very early Common Nighthawk heard by Brendan Klick and Don Harris on April 27th in the Town of Porter is eight days before the "write up" date.

Caspian Terns studied at Dunkirk Harbor (6) and Ripley (1) on April 3rd by Willie D'Anna resulted in a new early record for that species. The previous record was April 7, 1991 in Yates, also documented by Willie D'Anna. Since Caspian Terns are again breeding on Mohawk Island, even earlier records may be possible during this species migration, especially at and near Lake Erie. The Caspian Tern in Willie's photo below has two bands on each leg. Digital enhancement of the original color photograph shows the two bands on the left leg and one on right leg are red-orange and a fourth band on the right leg appears beige.

A great many falcons were reported in April. Five Peregrine Falcon and sixteen Merlin sightings are in

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for this month in three years, there are two exceptional records. First, Magnolia Warblers, on average, appear somewhat later in the warbler migration, so an April observation is very rare. This bird was documented by Terry Mosher on April 29 in the Town of Pomfret and is only



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the Noteworthy Records, thirteen required verification reports. The local increase in numbers of Peregrine Falcons and Merlins continues.

Both species are wintering in Buffalo and the last of the overwintering UB Merlins was reported on the 10th.

The only notable late records for our area are the Lesser Black-backed Gull at Dunkirk Harbor on April 27th and the Harlequin Duck found at Fort Erie during the April Count.

Saving the best to last – the rarities. A very rare GLOSSY IBIS was documented by Mike Morgante on April 27th at Iroquois NWR. The only earlier dates are from April 18, 1976 at the Newstead Sinks by Fran Rew and Art Clark and April 26, 1997 at

Eden (52) and in Elba (366) for a total 430 Pectoral Sandpipers. All but one was reported on a single day (Saturday, April 19) by different observers at three widely different locations. None were reported on Sunday, April 20. Since, Pectoral Sandpipers generally migrate northward through the Mississippi River flyway to their Arctic breeding grounds, it is tempting to speculate that stronger than usual westerly winds could shift the main flight path further east resulting in large numbers of this species in Western New York.

There are only five previous accepted records of ROSS'S GOOSE in our area, and only one from April. In pre1988 this species was considered of unknown origin or possibly an escaped bird. The Ross's Goose found while working Atlas Block 2179C in Hartland on April 22, by yours truly, is our sixth record. Like most records of this tiny white goose, it did not stay for an extended period of time.

On April 6, Peter Yoerg found three Canada Geese of the subspecies *B. c. hutchinsii* (Richardson's Geese) at the Gypsum Pond which is located on Hutton Road in Oakfield, and three hours later that day he found five more at Oxbow Marsh on the Oak Orchard WMA.

There were two records of the rare Greater White-fronted Goose. The first was seen by Peter Yoerg on Gypsum Pond with the Richardson's Geese (April 6) and the second by Michelle Coblentz on the April Count (April 13) at the Northeast corner of the intersection of Niagara-Orleans County Line Road and Route 18.

On April 19 (the same day as the Pectoral Sandpiper invasion) six GOLDEN EAGLES were reported, four at Ripley and two at Hamburg Hawk Watch. Four of these were documented with written verification reports; three at Ripley were immatures with conspicuous white wing patches and one at Hamburg was believed to be a subadult. This is a single day record for documented Golden Eagles in our area. There are only two other multiple record-days: April 15, 1990 (Hamburg and Wilson) and March 18, 2000 (these were wintering birds at Allegany S. P. and Allegany Reservoir).

Sandhill Cranes are one of the many non-hawk bonuses at the Hamburg Hawk Watch. On April 2nd two of these magnificent birds flew over giving Fran Rew and many other observers a rare treat.

Red-throated Loons are rarely found away from Lake Ontario. So when one was observed at Dunkirk Harbor on April 6, 12, 27, and 28 it was enjoyed by many local birders (see photo). The Common Loon on Gypsum Pond in Oakville was not as cooperative and was only seen on the 7th. Other rare birds were the

Tonawanda WMA by Alan Baczekiewicz. Most reports of this regionally rare bird have been in the month of May, with only a few April records.

Pectoral Sandpiper can be a boom-or-bust bird during this time of the year. For example, in April 2000 and 2002, **no** Pectoral Sandpipers were found. This April they were found in Ripley (1) Randolph (11)



Caspian Tern &  
Ring-billed Gull

Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna





Red-throated Loon & Hooded Mergansers Photo Courtesy of Willie D'Anna

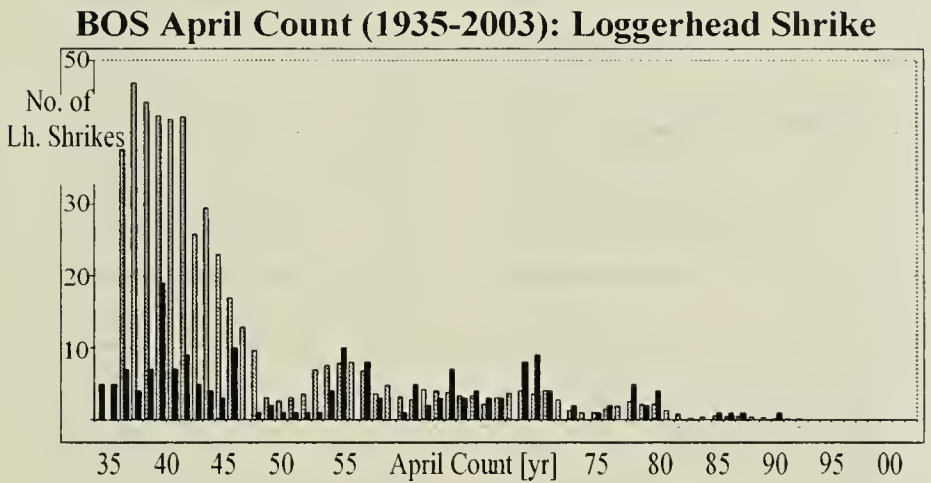
Northern Goshawk at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant and the Common Raven at Attica Reservoir.

While the Common Raven at Attica Reservoir may signal expansion of this species into Western New York, many other species are certainly in decline or essentially extirpated from our region. The **LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** found by Kurt Fox on April 15th at Shadigee is an example of this. Loggerhead Shrikes were fairly common in the late 1800's and early 1900's, and "Dr. Frank H. Lattin of Gains recalled that about 1875 he found three nests of this species while walking home from a point one mile distant..." By 1965 Beardslee and Mitchell lowered its status to "Uncommon Summer Resident and Casual very rare Winter Visitant," but noted its previous "fairly common" status (Beardslee and Mitchell 1965). This species' declining status has been documented in BOS April Counts.

The average April Count tally for individuals of this species declined from six (1935-1949), to three (1950-1969), to about one and one-half (1970-1990). Not a single Loggerhead Shrike has been recorded on the past thirteen April Counts. These data are shown in histogram plot format (below) for years 1935 to 2003 (black bars). The decline is even more dramatic when data is presented in a normalized mode (grey bars; see details in legend). Consistent with the April Count data, there are only twelve records of this species in our region for the **entire** twenty years past.

There are a number of variables that play into the count data and these should be recognized, however correcting for them may be difficult: (1) April Counts are not recorded on the same date each year, instead the count date spans nearly three weeks, from the earliest on March 30, 1947 to the latest on April 18, 1982. The timing is critical for Loggerhead Shrikes since they are most abundant from April 4 to 17 (Beardslee and Mitchell 1965). The 1935 to 1957 count date was

centered on the **first** week of April, with only two exceptions, while between 1958 and 2003, most counts were centered on the **second** week in April, (2) weather differences from year to year, (3) improvements in optics since 1935, especially the development and improvement of spotting scopes, (4) unequal coverage of the BOS study area, (5) 1955 boundary changes and the 1956 changes to section 28, (6) collective observer bias, and (7) other random sampling error due to the small sample size. Even with the above limitations on the quantitative use of these data, the qualitative trend of these data is clear and undebatable.



Histogram showing the number of Loggerhead Shrikes recorded (black) during the BOS April Count (1935-2003) and compared with an adjusted and averaged value (grey). The raw April Count data shows a downward trend for this species between the late 30s to the late 80s and is absent after 1990. This trend is even more dramatic if the numbers are adjusted to reflect the hypothetical situation of observing a similar total number of total birds during each of the counts,  $ave N_{total} \sim 175,000$ , and assuming the ratio of Loggerhead Shrike to  $ave N_{total}$  is a constant. The calculated number was further smoothed by averaging over a sliding five year window. For example the normalized value calculated for 1937 is the average number of Loggerhead Shrikes recorded during 1935 to 1939 multiplied by the ratio of total birds (all species) from 1998 to 2002 and 1935 to 1939 (see equation below). This ratio is  $>1$  for all five year periods earlier than 1990.

$$normalized N_{1937} = ave N_{1935 - 1939} \times \left( \frac{N_{total1998 - 2002}}{N_{total1935 - 1939}} \right)$$

I would like to acknowledge the following sources for providing information and suggestions in the writing of The Month.

Beardslee, C. S. and Mitchell. 1965. *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*. Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, vol. 22.  
McLaughlin, Kevin. National Weather Service, Buffalo, New York.  
Suggs, David. Custodian of BOS Noteworthy Data Base 1964-1997. (compiled by DiTomaso et. al.)  
Suggs, David et. al. 2002. *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds - The Niagara Frontier Region*. Buffalo Ornithological Society, Inc.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	6	1	<u>Dunkirk Harbor</u>	D'Anna
"	7	1	<u>Oakfield</u>	Klick
"	12; 27	1	<u>Dunkirk Harbor</u>	Andrle; Yoerg
"	28	1	<u>Dunkirk Harbor</u>	Mosher
Common Loon	2	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	3; 14	1; 3	Lime Lake	DeSha
"	3	5	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew et al
"	16	3	Hume	Brooks
"	26	5	L. Ontario Plain	Morgante
"	27	12	Olcott	Klick, Harris
Pied-billed Grebe	3	2	Lime Lake	DeSha
Horned Grebe	3	10	Freedom	DeSha
"	3	24	Lime Lake	DeSha
"	7	10	Oakfield	Klick, Harris
Red-necked Grebe	5; 6	3	Bear Lake	Mosher
"	13	2	Iroquois NWR	Brasure, Burch, Lipp
"	27	3	Shadigee, Yates	Klick, Harris
D.-crested Cormorant	3	7	Lime Lake	DeSha
"	3	150	Dunkirk Harbor	D'Anna
"	15; 20	76; 72	Motor I.	Watson
"	15	404	Buffalo Harbor	Watson
"	27	138	Motor I.	Watson
American Bittern	26F	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	27	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Great Blue Heron	1; 2; 11	27; 68; 60	Motor I.	Burch; Watson; Watson
* Great Egret	1	1	Beaver I. SP	Burch
"	9	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	11; 15; 20; 27	6; 9; 16; 12	Motor I.	Watson
"	16	5; 1; 1	Beaver I. SP; Freedom; Joseph Davis SP	Hess; DeSha; B & J Horne
"	26	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
* Green Heron	26	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	27	1	Westfield	Yoerg, Henderson
Black-cr. Night-Heron	1; 2; 11	99; 7; 23	Motor I.	Burch; Watson; Watson
"	9	2	Pomfret	Mosher, Miga
"	15; 27	41; 41	Motor I.	Watson
* <u>Glossy Ibis</u>	27F	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Turkey Vulture	10	554	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew et al
* <u>Gr. White-fr. Goose</u>	6	1	Oakfield	Yoerg
Snow Goose	6	2, 1 (blue)	Oakfield, Oak Orchard WMA	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	27	1 (blue)	Barre	Klick, Harris
* <u>Ross's Goose</u>	22	1	Hartland	Watson
Canada Goose:				
<u>B. c. hutchinsii</u>	6	3; 5	Oakfield, Oak Or. WMA	Yoerg
Mute Swan	1; 9	4; 3	Beaver I. SP	Burch; Hess
"	26	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
Tundra Swan	2	3	Lancaster	Morgante
"	22	1	Hartland	Watson
"	27	3	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Northern Shoveler	18	2	Lime Lake	DeSha
"	27	16	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Northern Pintail	27	3	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Ring-necked Duck	15	70	Tift NP	Watson
Lesser Scaup	27	20	Times Beach, Bflo.	Hess
Surf Scoter	26	6	Olcott	Morgante
"	28	2	E. Aurora	Holmes
White-winged Scoter	27	593	Olcott	Klick, Harris
Black Scoter	7	1	Oakfield	Klick, Harris
Long-tailed Duck	6	2	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
Hooded Merganser	6	47	Bear Lake	Mosher
Red-br. Merganser	24	2500	Barcelona Harbor	Morgante
Ruddy Duck	11	13	Bear Lake	Mosher
* Osprey	3	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew et al
"	11; 20	1; 3	Tonawanda	Hess
"	18	6	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	27	3	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Bald Eagle	12; 27	2 ad.; 3	Iroquois NWR	Burch; Morgante
"	14	1	Machias	DeSha
"	19	5	Ripley, Westfield	D'Anna et al
"	20	1 im.	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	24	1	Westfield	Morgante
<u>Northern Goshawk</u>	6	1 im.	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg
Red-shouldered Hawk	13; 24; 25	2; 2; 2	Alfred; Birdsall; Ward	Brooks
* Broad-winged Hawk	15F	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	18	24	Westfield	D'Anna
"	24	27	Ripley, Westfield	Morgante
Rough-legged Hawk	3	1	Farmersville	DeSha
* <u>Golden Eagle</u>	19	3	Ripley, Westfield	D'Anna et al
"	19	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Landau
Merlin	<u>3</u> ; <u>8</u> ; <u>9</u> ; <u>10</u>	2; 3; 3; 1	UB South Campus	Yoerg
"	<u>3</u>	1	Westfield	D'Anna, Morgante
"	<u>9</u>	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Chilton
"	18	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Andrle, Watson
"	18; 19	1; 2	Westfield	D'Anna; D'Anna et al
"	25	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Hamilton, Harris, Watson
Peregrine Falcon	<u>1</u> ; 10	2 ad.	Statler, Bflo.	Burch
"	<u>3</u>	1	UB South Campus	Yoerg
Virginia Rail	26F	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	27	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	27	1	Tift NP	Klick, Harris
* Sora	25F	1	Tift NP	Watson
"	25F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	26	1	Pomfret	Moshers et al
* Common Moorhen	27F	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
American Coot	9	1	Tifft NP	Watson
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	2	2	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew et al
Greater Yellowlegs	14	1	Tonawanda WMA	Hess
"	19	2; 2	S. Dayton; Conewango	DeSha
"	19	137	Elba	Klick, Harris
"	22	68	Ridgeway	Watson
Lesser Yellowlegs	19	1	Randolph	DeSha
"	19	71	Elba	Klick, Harris
"	22	2	Eden	Andrle
* Solitary Sandpiper	27F	1	Porter	Klick, Harris
* Upland Sandpiper	27F	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Pectoral Sandpiper	17	1	Ripley	Watson
"	19	11	Randolph	DeSha
"	19	52	Eden	Andrle
"	19	366	Elba	Klick, Harris
* Dunlin	19	19	Elba	Klick, Harris
"	26	1	Wilson Harbor	Morgante
Common Snipe	2	2	Lancaster	Morgante
"	8	10	Hamburg	Rew
"	9	6	Eden	Andrle
"	27	38	Somerset	Klick, Harris
"	27	25	Westfield	Yoerg, Henderson
American Woodcock	15	1	Andover	Brooks
Bonaparte's Gull	24	250	Barcelona Harbor	Morgante
"	27	511	Olcott	Klick, Harris
Iceland Gull	3; 5	1; 1	Dunkirk Harbor; Goat I.	D'Anna
Lesser Black-b. Gull	27L	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Glaucous Gull	6; 12	1; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Potter, D'Anna; Andrle
* Caspian Tern	3F	1; 6	Ripley; Dunkirk Harbor	D'Anna
"	12	19	Dunkirk Harbor	Andrles
"	15	66	Dunkirk Harbor	Mosher
"	24	22	Barcelona Harbor	Morgante
"	27	50	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Tern	15	27	LaSalle Park, Bflo.	Watson
"	24	3	Barcelona Harbor	Morgante
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	27	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Klick, Harris
* Common Nighthawk	27F	1	Porter	Klick, Harris
* Chimney Swift	23F; 28	1; 1	Buffalo; Ripley	D'Anna
"	29	1	Ripley	Watson
Red-headed Wdpkr.	27	1	Hamburg	Klick, Harris
Red-bellied Wdpkr.	16 - 30	1	Eden Valley	Andrle
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	3	1	Westfield	D'Anna
"	6	2	Oak Orchard WMA	Seamans, Watson (BOS)
"	15	1; 4	Ward	Brooks
* <u>Loggerhead Shrike</u>	15F	1	Shadigee	Fox
* Blue-headed Vireo	19F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	19F	2	Ripley	D'Anna, Potter
Common Raven	14; 25	1; 2	Alfred; Ward	Brooks
"	19	1	<u>Attica Reservoir</u>	Klick
N. Rough-w. Swallow	15	2; 1	Tifft NP; Westfield	Watson; Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	20	1	Ripley	D'Anna, Potter
* Cliff Swallow	27F	13	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Barn Swallow	17	1	Ripley	Watson
Carolina Wren	1 - 30	1	Eden Valley	Andrle
"	9; 15	1; 2	Tifft NP	Watson
"	27	2	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	27	1; 3	Beaver I. SP; Tifft NP	Klick, Harris
"	29	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
House Wren	20	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	27	1	Hamburg	Morgante
Winter Wren	6	2	Pomfret	Mosher
"	15	2	Ward	Brooks
* Marsh Wren	27F	1; 3	Iroquois NWR; Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	15	4	Tifft NP	Watson
"	19	1	Goat I.	Morgante
* Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	26F	2	Four Mile Creek SP	Potter, D'Anna
"	27	1; 1	Tifft NP; Pt. Gratiot	Klick, Harris; Yoerg
Hermit Thrush	20F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	26	2	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
Gray Catbird	12F	1	Ripley	D'Anna
* Brown Thrasher	18F	1	Hamburg	Watson
"	20	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	24	6	Ripley, Westfield	Morgante
American Pipit	6	11	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Andrle, Harris
"	6	20	Oakfield	Yoerg
"	8	32	Hamburg	Rew
Cedar Waxwing	18 - 26	21	Alfred	Brooks
* Nashville Warbler	29F	1; 2	Tifft NP; Amherst SP	Potter, DiTommaso; Yoerg
"	30	1	Lakeside MP, Hmbg.	Andrle
* Yellow Warbler	30F	2	Goat I.	Potter
* Magnolia Warbler	29F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Yellow-r. Warbler	21; 25	1, 1; 2	Alfred, Ward; Ward	Brooks
"	24	1	Ripley	Morgante
"	29	35	Amherst SP	Yoerg
* Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	19F	1	Goat I.	Morgante
"	24	1	Ripley	Morgante
Pine Warbler	25F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	26	1; 1; 1	Tifft NP; Lake Erie SP; Olcott	Andrle; Mosher et al; Morgante
* Palm Warbler	24F	1	Ripley	Morgante
"	27	1	Tifft NP	Klick, Harris
* Black-and-white Warb.	29F	2	Amherst SP	Yoerg
* La. Waterthrush	20F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	24	1	Ripley	Morgante
Eastern Towhee	1	1	Alfred	G. Harris
"	5	2	Wheatfield	Potter, D'Anna
Chipping Sparrow	11	1	Westfield	D'Anna
"	16	2	Hume	Brooks
* Field Sparrow	1F	1	Eden Valley (f)	Andrle
"	24; 26	1; 1	Allen; Alfred	Brooks
Vesper Sparrow	3	1	Westfield	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	9	2	Hanover	Mosher
Savannah Sparrow	22	1	Hartland	Watson
* Grasshopper Sparrow	27F	1	Newfane	Klick, Harris
Fox Sparrow	1 - 27	10 reports	Throughout WNY	Many observers
Swamp Sparrow	16F	2	Birdsall	Brooks
"	20	3	Tifft NP	Watson
White-cr. Sparrow	25F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	29	4	Tifft NP	Potter, DiTommaso
Lapland Longspur	6	10	Oakfield	Yoerg
"	24L	1	Ripley	Morgante
Rusty Blackbird	6	1	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg
"	27	1	Newfane	Klick, Harris

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded: 142**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue, including April Count: 38**

**Total for the year 2003: 180**

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## Warblers

*by Harold D. Mitchell (1937) originally printed in  
Audobon Outlook Vol IX, No. 2 April, 1960*

Now comes the merry month of May  
When woods are full of warblers gay.  
Bedecked in courtship's costume trim  
We find it easy to see just "him"  
His mate creates but little stir  
And oft the tyro misses "her".  
Keen ears detect the singing male;  
Here musical notations fail  
To properly record his voice.  
Mayhaps, that's why he made such choice  
Of notes, that only he could sing  
And thus announce himself each spring.

Some warblers stay and make their quest  
Of proper site to build a nest.  
The "yellow bird", if we will watch,  
Will often choose a sapling crotch;  
Blackburnians will show us how  
To build a home on a hemlock bough;  
The Ovenbird, fastidious fop!  
Disdains a nest with an open top;  
In wet woods or a deep ravine  
The waterthrush is often seen,  
While never far above the ground  
The nest of Golden-winged is found.

Many pause but briefly in their flight,  
And pass on in a host by night  
To summer in the northern woods  
Made tuneful by their joyous moods.  
Many the secrets they might tell  
Of lovely glade and woodland dell,  
Untouched by all but nature's hand.  
Would that we could but understand!  
As summer wanes and molt is o'er,  
The host is on the move once more  
Much slower now on their southward way.  
Oh! What a long stretch until next May!



# April Count Averages Compared

by Mike Hamilton

Whereas there was a large number (11) of notable highest counts for the April 2003 BOS Count, the figures that tell us the most about changes to the numbers of individual species are comparisons of averages over long periods of time. And because the geographical configuration of the BOS area was changed in 1955 to its present size and location\*, it is interesting to compare data for the entire count period from 1935 to 2003 with that from 1955-2003. With this in mind I have prepared the following chart comparing data for 24 species, which have shown major change in the last decade from both the 1935 to present and 1955 to present time periods. It is interesting to note that the decreases show a continuous trend whereas the increases do not vary that much between the two periods.

AVERAGE COMPARISONS OF BOS APRIL COUNTS - 1994-2003/1935-2003 AND 1994-2003/1955-2003							
average sightings				average sightings			
LOONS-DUCKS	94-'03 / 35-'03	% increase	% decrease	94-'03 / 55-'03	% increase	% decrease	
Red-throated Loon	14 / 2	600		14 / 2	600		
Great Egret	6 / 1	500		6 / 1	500		
Tundra Swan	44 / 96		54	44 / 65		32	
Wood Duck	361 / 138	162		361 / 133	171		
American Black Duck	68 / 292		77	68 / 131		48	
Northern Pintail	347 / 1194		71	347 / 511		32	
Redhead	31 / 137		77	31 / 76		59	
White-winged Scoter	506 / 102	396		506 / 99	411		
Common Merganser	496 / 1182		58	496 / 943		47	
Ruddy Duck	283 / 68	316		283 / 59	380		
RAPTORS-CRANES							
Osprey	22 / 7	214		22 / 7	214		
Sharp-shinned Hawk	60 / 26	131		60 / 25	140		
Wild Turkey	267 / 67	299		267 / 67	299		
PLOVERS-TERNS							
Bonaparte's Gull	14346 / 4450	222		14346 / 3994	259		
Caspian Tern	26 / 5	420		26 / 5	420		
DOVES-SWALLOWS							
Rock Dove	1385 / 775	79		1385 / 765	81		
Mourning Dove	1568 / 726	116		1568 / 698	125		
Horned Lark	93 / 200		54	93 / 150		38	
Tree Swallow	1493 / 667	124		1493 / 650	130		
N Rough-winged Swallow	38 / 8	375		38 / 8	375		
Barn Swallow	32 / 17	88		32 / 16	100		
TITS-WAXWINGS							
Tufted Titmouse	110 / 28	293		110 / 27	307		
Red-breasted Nuthatch	53 / 21	152		53 / 20	165		
WARBLERS							
Yellow-rumped Warbler	15 / 6	150		15 / 6	150		
TANAGERS-HOUSE SPARROWS							

\* **Change in B. O. S. Boundaries** - The area covered by participants in the April Counts changed on January 12, 1955. The study area was changed to conform to a boundary between the Buffalo Ornithological Society and the Genesee Ornithological Society that was recommended by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs.

Before January 12, 1955, the eastern boundary was the Genesee River and the western boundary in Canada was from the north shore of Lake Erie up "the Grand River north west to Dunnville, north from Dunnville to the Welland River, east to the Welland Canal and north on the canal to Lake Ontario."

After January 12, 1955, the eastern boundary was as follows: "Route 98 from Lake Ontario south to Batavia, Route 63 south to Pavillion, Route 19 south-east to Warsaw and south to the Allegany County line, then east and south along the northern and eastern edges of Allegany County to the Pennsylvania state line. At the same time it was voted to revise our western boundary in the Province of Ontario as follows: a line following the road from Rainham Center (near Lake Erie) northward to Route 3. Route 3 eastward to Canboro, the Smithville Road to Smithville, and the road from Smithville to Grimsby Beach". (Beardslee and Mitchell 1965)

This adjustment of the eastern boundary resulted in the loss of about 32 miles of Lake Ontario shoreline and associated lake plain, which included the important Hamlin Beach and Braddock Bay areas. This was partially compensated by a gain of about 17 miles of Lake Ontario shoreline in Canada between Port Weller and Grimsby, and a gain of about 13 miles of shoreline on the north shore of Lake Erie between the mouth of the Grand River and Rainham Center. (Note that the Lake Erie shoreline averages 325 feet higher in elevation than the Lake Ontario shoreline.)

The boundary changes resulted in a decrease of the Sub-Carolinian Avifauna Zone (246 to about 700 feet elevation) which is characterized by breeding Tufted Titmice, Carolina Wren, Blue-winged Warbler, and Northern Mockingbird, and a decrease of the Alleghenian Zone (700-1800 feet elevation) which is characterized by Eastern Wood-Pewee, Ovenbird, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Bobolink, and Baltimore Oriole. The addition of the eastern half of Allegany County resulted in about a 25% increase of the Sub-Canadian Zone (above 1800 feet elevation) which is characterized by Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Winter Wrens, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush. (Watson, 2002)



# Report of the 2003 Annual B.O.S. April Bird Count

Date: April 13, 2003

Weather: Terry Yonker, Compiler: Mike Hamilton

**Weather Synopsis:** The entire count area was under the influence of an expanding area of high pressure that was moving slowly to the northeast. A wind shift occurred during the late afternoon resulting in some brief cloudiness; followed by rapid clearing, lower humidity and briefly stronger winds from the northwest. Much stronger winds and cooler temperatures were observed along the Lake Ontario shoreline.

## Greater Buffalo International Airport

Sunrise: 6:38 AM

Sunset: 7:56 PM

TIME	WEATHER	TEMP	DEW PT	PRESSURE	DIR/WIND	REMARKS
12:00 am	Clear	36	30	30.07	NW9	
3:00 am	Clear	32	27	30.10	N6	
6:00 am	Clear	30	25	30.15	NW6	
9:00 am	Sunny	36	24	30.23	NE7	
12:00 pm	Sunny	43	22	30.27	VR7	
3:00 pm	Mostly Sunny	47	23	30.25	NW12	
6:00 pm	Mostly Sunny	48	12	30.25	NW9	Wind shift
9:00 pm	Clear	36	24	30.28	S7	
12:00 am	Clear	34	24	30.31	SW7	

**Compilation:** The following is a list of species recorded on the count together with the number of individuals tabulated. Bold face names indicate species for which acceptable written verification forms were received. **F** represents first and **L** last dates for the spring migration. \* first date for the year. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers are given in parentheses.

## Loons - Ducks

Red-throated Loon	1	(5)	Northern Shoveler	126
Common Loon	68		Northern Pintail	2966
Pied-billed Grebe	113		Green-winged Teal	363
Horned Grebe	231		Canvasback	18
Red-necked Grebe	1384		Redhead	117
Double-crested Cormorant	1072		Ring-necked Duck	1193
American Bittern	*F	2 (21,26)	Greater Scaup	802
Great Blue Heron	679		Lesser Scaup	1248
Great Egret	10	(9,11)	unspecified scaup	151 (2,4)
Blk.-crowned Night-Heron	195	(2,9,11)	<b>Harlequin Duck</b>	1 (8)
Turkey Vulture	812		Surf Scoter	23 (3,4,5)
<b>Greater White-front. Goose</b>	1	(4)	White-winged Scoter	2552
Canada Goose	57480		Black Scoter	1 (3)
Mute Swan	9		Long-tailed Duck	16851
Tundra Swan	55		Bufflehead	8044
Wood Duck	405		Common Goldeneye	1285
Gadwall	83		Hooded Merganser	642
American Wigeon	238		Common Merganser	525
American Black Duck	81		Red-breasted Merganser	6929
Mallard	1749		Ruddy Duck	308
Blue-winged Teal	99		unspecified waterfowl	15 (13,17)

## Raptors - Coots

Osprey	13		American Kestrel	169
Bald Eagle	15		Merlin	2 (18,20)
Northern Harrier	68		Peregrine Falcon	1 (11)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	87		unspecified hawks	1 (12)
Cooper's Hawk	24		Ring-necked Pheasant	37
unspecified accipters	1	(1)	Ruffed Grouse	23
Red-shouldered Hawk	15		Wild Turkey	310
Broad-winged Hawk	*F	1 (20)	Virginia Rail	1 (12)
Red-tailed Hawk	409		American Coot	242
Rough-legged Hawk	7			



Plovers – Terns					
Killdeer	317		Ring-billed Gull	44244	
Greater Yellowlegs	21		Herring Gull	1466	
Lesser Yellowlegs	*F 3	(5,10)	Iceland Gull	3	(3,6)
Pectoral Sandpiper	5	(10)	Lesser Black-backed Gull	2	(3,6)
Wilson’s Snipe	103		Glaucous Gull	1	(3)
American Woodcock	36		Great Black-backed Gull	236	
Little Gull	6	(2,3)	Caspian Tern	74	
Bonaparte’s Gull	14408		Common Tern	*F 1	(10)

Doves - Swallows					
Rock Dove	1520		Northern Flicker	328	
Mourning Dove	1933		Pileated Woodpecker	37	
Eastern Screech-Owl	12		Eastern Phoebe	134	
Great Horned Owl	10		Northern Shrike	2	(8,13)
Barred Owl	3	(12,15,20)	Blue Jay	840	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	(5)	American Crow	2258	
Belted Kingfisher	81		Common Raven	15	
Red-headed Woodpecker	2	(10,23)	Horned Lark	164	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	116		Purple Martin	*F 5	(5,6)
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	46		Tree Swallow	582	
Downy Woodpecker	337		N.Rough-winged Swallow	*F 1	(16)
Hairy Woodpecker	65		Barn Swallow	12	(5,12,22)

Tits - Waxwings					
Black-capped Chickadee	1228		Ruby-crowned Kinglet	*F 4	
Tufted Titmouse	104		Eastern Bluebird	169	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	32		Hermit Thrush	10	
White-breasted Nuthatch	192		American Robin	6869	
unspecified nuthatches	2	(2)	Gray Catbird	1	(14)
Brown Creeper	66		Northern Mockingbird	29	
Carolina Wren	17		European Starling	19066	
House Wren	*F 1	(13)	American Pipit	293	
Winter Wren	19		Cedar Waxwing	24	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	145				

Warblers - House Sparrows					
Yellow-rumped Warbler	3	(22)	Dark-eyed Junco	1613	
Eastern Towhee	10		Lapland Longspur	6	(3,5)
American Tree Sparrow	184		Northern Cardinal	822	
Chipping Sparrow	92		Red-winged Blackbird	5909	
Field Sparrow	36		Eastern Meadowlark	90	
Vesper Sparrow	5	(3,18,24)	Rusty Blackbird	333	
Savannah Sparrow	31		Common Grackle	5516	
Fox Sparrow	64		Brown-headed Cowbird	1023	
Song Sparrow	2046		Purple Finch	170	
Swamp Sparrow	105		House Finch	536	
White-throated Sparrow	127		American Goldfinch	870	
White-crowned Sparrow	26		House Sparrow	1443	

SUMMARY INFORMATION:    Total Species Observed: 139  
                                       Total Individual Birds Observed: 229114  
                                       Number of Observers: 257

COMPARATIVE INFORMATION: Associated charts, available from Michael Hamilton, compare this year’s records with those for 1994-2003 and those for 1935-2003. A chart listing totals for each species per section for 2003 is also available. In addition the following notes are added:



## INDIVIDUAL SPECIES SINCE 1935:

Highest counts: Red-necked Grebe, 1384 (48 x the ave.); Double-crested Cormorant, 1072 (14 x the ave.); Great Blue Heron, 679 (4 x the ave.); Surf Scoter, 23 (23 x the ave.); White-winged Scoter, 2552 (25 x the ave.); Long-tailed Duck, 16851 (17 x the ave.); Hooded Merganser, 642 (5 x the ave.); Bald Eagle, 15 (8 x the ave.); Eastern Screech-Owl, 12 (6 x the ave.); Pileated Woodpecker, 37 (6 x the ave.); Common Raven, 15 (8 x the ave.)

Rare count sightings: Greater White-fronted Goose, 1 (2<sup>nd</sup> sighting in decade, 4<sup>th</sup> since '35); Harlequin Duck, 1 (1<sup>st</sup> sighting in decade, 4<sup>th</sup> since '35); House Wren, 1 (2<sup>nd</sup> sighting since '35, 1<sup>st</sup> was last year)

## NOTEABLE SPECIES AVERAGE CHANGES (entire count / last decade):

Red-throated Loon, 2/14; Great Egret, 1/6; Tundra Swan, 96/44; Wood Duck, 138/361; American Black Duck, 292/68; Northern Pintail, 1194/347; Redhead, 137/31; White-winged Scoter, 102/506; Common Merganser, 1182/466; Ruddy Duck, 68/283; Osprey, 7/22; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 26/60; Wild Turkey, 67/267; Bonaparte's Gull, 4450/14346; Caspian Tern, 5/26; Rock Dove, 775/1385; Mourning Dove, 726/1568; Horned Lark, 200/93; Tree Swallow, 667/1493; Northern Rough-winged Swallow, 8/38; Barn Swallow, 17/32; Tufted Titmouse, 28/110; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 21/53; Yellow-rumped Warbler, 6/15

## OBSERVERS (Section compilers are printed in **bold** face.):

- Section 1: David Cooper, **Lynne Landon**, Jim Wojewodski, Terry Yonker  
Section 2: Brian Ahara, Gordon Bellerby, **John Black**, Kayo Roy, Maggie Smiley, Al Smith, Katharine Stoltz  
Section 3: Bill Broderick, Ken Cohen, **Willie D'Anna**, Michael Drahms, Betsy Potter, Vicki Rothman  
Section 4: Michelle Coblenz, Donald House, **William Watson**  
Section 5: Don Brasure, Bill Burch, Don Harris, **Brendan Klick**, Bob Lipp  
Section 6: **Jerry Chapple**, George Thomas  
Section 7: Bobby Byron, Richard Byron, Ed Fuchs, **Mike Hamilton**, Jack Mansfield, Sonja Mansfield  
Section 8: **Doug Happ**, Mike Zebehazy  
Section 9: Pat Bogan, Olive Burch, Willie D'Anna, Wes Dragoo, Michael Galas, Sylvia Galas, Ron Hacker, Sue Hacker, Bill Michalek, Susan M. O'Donnell, Thomas M. O'Donnell, Jim Pawlecki, Betsy Potter, **Gerry Rising**, Mary Kate Sidoti, Joe Stein, Marlene Szuromi  
Section 10: Dr. Edward Crohn, Robert Deleon, Don Harris, Brendan Klick, **Donald Roberson**, Timothy Simon, Mary Ann Stegmeier  
Section 11: Michael Davis, **Alec Humann**  
Section 12: Alan Backiewicz, Ann Bauer, Marion Bee, Greg Coniglio, Paul Fuhrmann, Linda Holmes, Jackie Isgro, Melissa Mancini, **Mike Morgante**, Ruth Phillips, Jr., Gail Seamans  
Section 13: Doug Beattie, Elaine Dart, Tad Gerace, Eileen Hull, Robert Hull, Aron Kehlenbeck, Zeke Kehlenbeck, Marie Johnson, Alice McKale, Dolores Seamans, **Gail Seamans**, Donald Thureau  
Section 14: Lois Abbot, Ginger Black, Ken Brandes, Joanne Dobler, Tim Goff, Phyl Hanson, Glenna Leous, Mark Leous, Pat Maddigan, **Barbara Walker**, Margaret Wooley, Audrey Zegabarth  
Section 15: Gene Antkowiak, **William Bogacki**, Ed Ratajczak, Dennis Russell  
Section 16: Patricia Andriele, Robert Andriele, Thomas Connare, Audrey Horbett, **Frances Rew**, Joseph Thill  
Section 17: Susan M. O'Donnell, **Thomas M. O'Donnell**  
Section 18: **Bruce Chilton**, Barbara Henderson, James Landau, Karen Landau, Peter Yoerg  
Section 19: Ron Andrews, Faye Clancy, Barbara Cronk, Lyle Hotchkiss, LaNebra Husted, Dora Lilly, Joan MacEwan, Louise Mills, Cindy Moyles, Roger Nicholson, John Raybuck, Michael Raybuck, Teresa Rork, Linda Roth, Pauline Schmitz, Bill Smith, **Elaine Smith**, Marion Smith, Max Smith, James Talbot, Millie Thayer, Ann Vaclavik, Ann Voss, Denton Willet, Jay Wilson, Jean Wilson, **Larry Wilson**, Richard Wilson, Roseanna Wilson  
Section 20: Allen Benton, Chris Budniewski, Raymond Budniewski, **Joanne Goetz**, Thomas Goetz, Carolyn Grady, Michael Grady, Joseph Gula, Terry Mahoney, Richard Miga, Judy Mosher, Terry Mosher, Marilyn O'Connell, Thomas O'Connell, Robert Peterson, Aisha Pitts, Brian Pitts, Audrey Schafer, Jean Taft, Lynda Taft, Ted Taft, Jr., Ted Taft, S. Doris Welch, Thomas Welch  
Section 21: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jessie Nelson, Joanne Nelson, Linda O'Brien, Bill Seleen, **Bob Sundell**  
Section 22: Ann Beebe, Jim Berry, Seth Berry, Len DeFransisco, Ranjit Laha, Linda O'Brien, **Bob Sundell**  
Section 23: Rosemary Angove, Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jean Pigman, Bill Seleen, Tom Simmons, **Bob Sundell**  
Section 24: **Tim Baird**  
Section 25: **Tim Baird**, Stephen W. Eaton  
Section 26: **Doris Burton**, Mary Jordan, Ann Scott  
Section 27: Russell Allen, **Doris Burton**, Dan Babcock, Harold Babcock, Norman Ives, Helen Link, Wilma Sanford  
Section 28: Russell Allen, Carol Behn, Ellen Baker, Wayne Brewster, Don Brink, Lorna Brink, Betsy Brooks, Debbie Bucholz, K. Burdick, **Doris Burton**, Mary Lou Cartledge, **Diane Converso**, Jim Copenheaver, Pauletta Copenheaver, Paul Culley, Elsie Cushing, Val Cushing, Audrey Dunham, Ann Eisenhardt, Jamie Eisenhardt, Peg Eisenhardt, Peter Finlay, Terry Finlay, John Gradoni, Gerri Hills, Ralph Hills, Betty Kellogg, Wayne Kellogg, Elsie Kent, Barry Lash, Martha Lash, Woodie Lang, Cathy MacDonald, Ken McClure, **Marion McClure**, Mary Ormsby, Lyle Palmiter, Thelma Palmiter, Beverly Perry, Sean Phelan, Ann Pipal, Bob Pipal, Vivian Pitzrick, Dan Ramsey, Evelyn Ramsey, Nicole Ramsey, Debra Rase, Peggy Rase, Ona Reynolds, Nancy Rouse, Jim Smith, Cathy Sorochin, Maureen Soule', Terah Soule', Wilma Taggart, Evelyn Thomas, Mary Lu Wells, **Suzanne Wood**



Buffalo Ornithological Society April Count Summaries - 1935-2003 & 1994-2003

Count number:	68
Date:	4/13/03

1935 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/68

1994 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/10

L O O N S - D U C K S

Red-throated Loon	1
Common Loon	68
Pied-billed Grebe	113
Horned Grebe	231
Red-necked Grebe	1384
Eared Grebe	
Double-crested Cormorant	1072
American Bittern	2
Great Blue Heron	679
Great Egret	10
Green Heron	
Black-crowned Night-Heron	195
Turkey Vulture	812
Greater White-fronted Goose	1
Snow Goose	
Canada Goose	57480
Lesser Canada Goose	
Mute Swan	9
Trumpeter Swan	
Tundra Swan	55
Wood Duck	405
Gadwall	83
Eurasian Wigeon	
American Wigeon	238
American Black Duck	81
Mallard	1749
Blue-winged Teal	99
Northern Shoveler	126
Northern Pintail	2966
Green-winged Teal	363
Canvasback	18
Redhead	117
Ring-necked Duck	1193
Greater Scaup	802
Lesser Scaup	1248
unspecified scaup	151
King Eider	
Harlequin Duck	1
Surf Scoter	23
White-winged Scoter	2552
Black Scoter	1
unspecified scoters	
Long-tailed Duck	16851
Bufflehead	8044
Common Goldeneye	1285
Barrow's Goldeneye	
Hooded Merganser	642
Common Merganser	525
Red-breasted Merganser	6929
unspecified mergansers	
Ruddy Duck	308
unspecified waterfowl	15

2	54	0	18
30	201	0	62
59	214	0	67
155	941	0	65
29	1384	0	35
0	2	0	1
77	1072	0	27
2	9	0	37
163	679	0	66
1	11	0	30
1	92	0	8
42	306	0	52
240	4514	0	67
0	3	0	4
6	97	0	48
32014	103467	55	68
0	1	0	1
1	21	0	27
0	1	0	1
96	804	1	68
138	449	0	65
25	141	0	60
0	2	0	9
324	1270	68	68
292	2451	21	68
747	3077	11	68
132	494	2	68
37	191	0	63
1194	8745	0	67
82	381	2	68
412	2329	0	67
137	993	0	67
500	2815	38	68
1329	5986	0	54
790	8439	0	54
610	7199	0	17
0	3	0	6
0	1	0	4
1	23	0	8
102	2552	0	54
2	32	0	22
0	10	0	4
989	16851	0	67
970	8044	13	68
928	3068	66	68
0	2	0	1
122	642	10	68
1182	7894	114	68
3684	24455	208	68
0	0	0	0
68	996	0	58
1	24	0	4

47.7 x average  
13.9 x average  
4.1 x average

14	54	1	10
101	201	9	10
102	214	34	10
165	275	30	10
179	1384	0	9
0	2	0	1
479	1072	68	10
1	3	0	5
378	679	201	10
6	11	0	9
0	1	0	3
122	264	7	10
837	4514	71	10
0	1	0	2
3	8	0	7
28325	57480	12290	10
0	0	0	0
4	11	0	8
0	1	0	1
44	127	14	10
361	449	254	10
62	141	22	10
0	1	0	1
224	365	111	10
68	127	21	10
1442	1877	1104	10
110	173	61	10
122	191	44	10
347	2966	0	9
193	381	72	10
119	482	9	10
31	117	0	9
1004	1632	585	10
1312	5986	54	10
1527	8439	282	10
760	7199	0	5
0	0	0	0
0	1	0	1
3	23	0	4
506	2552	17	10
4	32	0	4
1	10	0	3
2792	16851	134	10
3036	8044	673	10
507	1285	67	10
0	0	0	0
235	642	106	10
496	916	171	10
5861	13230	2182	10
0	0	0	0
283	996	5	10
7	24	0	4

7.7 x average  
2.2 x average  
1.8 x average

8.5 x average  
3.8 x average

1 ea., '52,'54,'78  
23 x average  
25 x average  
17 x average  
8.3 x average  
5.2 x average

first of decade  
7.7 x average  
5 x average  
6 x average  
2.6 x average  
2.5 x average  
2.7 x average

R A P T O R S - C R A N E S

Osprey	13
Bald Eagle	15
Northern Harrier	68
Sharp-shinned Hawk	87
Cooper's Hawk	24
Northern Goshawk	
unspecified accipiters	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	15
Broad-winged Hawk	1

7	54	0	51
2	15	0	44
48	145	14	68
26	181	0	67
11	46	0	66
0	3	0	13
0	2	0	4
20	230	3	68
1	42	0	18

7.5 x average

22	53	8	10
7	15	2	10
64	118	39	10
60	180	13	10
20	46	8	10
0	2	0	3
1	2	0	3
13	34	5	10
1	5	0	3

2.1 x average



# Buffalo Ornithological Society April Count Summaries - 1935-2003 & 1994-2003

Count number: 68	
Date: 4/13/03	
Red-tailed Hawk	409
Rough-legged Hawk	7
unspecified buteos	
Golden Eagle	
American Kestrel	169
Merlin	2
Peregrine Falcon	1
unspecified falcons	
unspecified hawks	1
Gray Partridge	
Ring-necked Pheasant	37
Ruffed Grouse	23
Wild Turkey	310
Northern Bobwhite	
Virginia Rail	1
Sora	
Common Moorhen	
American Coot	242
Sandhill Crane	

1935 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/68
166	715	5	68
15	68	0	66
0	3	0	4
0	2	0	2
145	403	13	68
0	8	0	18
0	3	0	10
0	1	0	1
0	1	0	2
0	2	0	2
92	294	0	67
23	92	0	63
67	385	0	44
0	17	0	3
0	4	0	13
0	3	0	8
0	4	0	14
187	1334	0	67
0	3	0	4

1994 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/10
320	532	109	10
15	30	0	9
1	3	0	4
0	2	0	1
193	294	116	10
1	2	0	6
0	1	0	2
0	1	0	1
0	1	0	2
0	0	0	0
28	37	15	10
27	43	11	10
267	385	120	10
0	0	0	0
1	4	0	5
0	1	0	2
0	1	0	2
411	1334	78	10
0	2	0	2

2 x average

1.3 x average

## PLOVERS - TERNS

Black-bellied Plover	
American Golden-Plover	
Semipalmated Plover	
Killdeer	317
Greater Yellowlegs	21
Lesser Yellowlegs	3
Solitary Sandpiper	
Spotted Sandpiper	
Upland Sandpiper	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	
Least Sandpiper	
Pectoral Sandpiper	5
Purple Sandpiper	
Dunlin	
Common Snipe	103
American Woodcock	36
unspecified shorebirds	
Little Gull	6
Black-headed Gull	
Bonaparte's Gull	14408
Ring-billed Gull	44244
Herring Gull	1466
Iceland Gull	3
Lesser Black-backed Gull	2
Glaucous Gull	1
Great Black-backed Gull	236
unspecified gulls	
Caspian Tern	74
Common Tern	1
Forster's Tern	
unspecified terns	

0	1	0	1
0	1	0	1
0	3	0	2
376	1638	0	67
12	85	0	58
4	47	0	43
0	2	0	2
0	3	0	10
0	2	0	11
0	13	0	1
0	0	0	0
49	946	0	43
0	10	0	5
0	8	0	4
64	261	0	65
22	54	0	65
1	60	0	1
3	21	0	23
0	1	0	4
4450	37684	0	65
19650	102398	0	67
2698	13322	0	67
1	5	0	31
0	3	0	5
1	5	0	38
58	421	0	67
4	300	0	2
5	107	0	20
14	277	0	33
0	1	0	2
0	1	0	1

0	1	0	1
0	0	0	0
0	3	0	1
404	581	283	10
24	85	3	10
8	28	2	10
0	1	0	1
0	1	0	2
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
11	32	0	8
1	5	0	1
0	2	0	2
92	261	24	10
31	43	16	10
0	0	0	0
13	21	2	10
0	1	0	2
14346	37684	2979	10
33810	47993	21786	10
3227	6219	954	10
2	4	0	7
1	3	0	4
1	2	0	6
193	421	79	10
30	300	0	2
26	107	0	9
6	28	0	9
0	1	0	2
0	1	0	1

## DOVES - SWALLOW S

Rock Dove	1520
Mourning Dove	1933
Barn Owl	
Eastern Screech-Owl	12
Great Horned Owl	10
Snowy Owl	
Barred Owl	3
Long-eared Owl	
Short-eared Owl	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1
unspecified owls	

775	2586	0	49
726	2412	0	67
0	3	0	12
2	12	0	51
10	34	0	66
0	3	0	13
2	11	0	50
1	8	0	39
3	18	0	40
0	3	0	12
0	0	0	0

6 x average

1385	1673	979	10
1568	2412	1134	10
0	1	0	1
5	12	0	9
13	18	7	10
0	0	0	1
5	11	1	10
1	4	0	7
2	5	0	7
1	3	0	6
0	0	0	0

2.4 x average



Buffalo Ornithological Society April Count Summaries - 1935-2003 & 1994-2003

Count number: 68	
Date: 4/13/03	
Whip-poor-will	
Chimney Swift	
Belted Kingfisher	81
Red-headed Woodpecker	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	116
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	46
Downy Woodpecker	337
Hairy Woodpecker	65
Northern Flicker	328
Pileated Woodpecker	37
unspecified woodpeckers	
Eastern Phoebe	134
Eastern Kingbird	
Loggerhead Shrike	
Northern Shrike	2
unspecified shrikes	
Blue-headed Vireo	
Blue Jay	840
American Crow	2258
Common Raven	15
Horned Lark	164
Purple Martin	5
Tree Swallow	582
N Rough-winged Swallow	1
Bank Swallow	
Cliff Swallow	
Barn Swallow	12
unspecified swallows	

1935 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/68
0	1	0	1
0	1	0	2
69	172	0	66
3	12	0	49
16	132	0	49
19	90	0	58
217	474	0	67
67	205	0	67
245	1229	0	67
11	37	0	60
0	2	0	2
123	458	0	66
0	1	0	1
3	19	0	44
1	5	0	21
0	2	0	2
0	3	0	2
495	1586	0	67
2146	5168	0	67
2	15	0	14
200	1294	0	67
30	696	0	46
667	6575	0	64
8	283	0	27
2	50	0	13
0	9	0	6
17	204	0	40
0	4	0	1

1994 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/10
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
86	120	62	10
2	5	0	8
61	132	25	10
48	90	11	10
315	378	209	10
71	109	50	10
381	898	83	10
22	37	11	10
0	1	0	1
238	437	130	10
0	1	0	1
0	0	0	0
1	5	0	6
0	0	0	0
0	3	0	2
840	1061	505	10
3086	3902	2258	10
10	15	3	10
93	164	48	10
29	137	0	8
1493	3216	505	10
38	283	0	8
0	2	0	2
0	1	0	2
32	74	0	9
0	4	0	1

T I T S - W A X W I N G S	
Black-capped Chickadee	1228
Boreal Chickadee	
Tufted Titmouse	104
Red-breasted Nuthatch	32
White-breasted Nuthatch	192
unspecified nuthatches	2
Brown Creeper	66
Carolina Wren	17
House Wren	1
Winter Wren	19
Marsh Wren	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	145
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	
Eastern Bluebird	169
Veery	
Hermit Thrush	10
American Robin	6869
Gray Catbird	1
Northern Mockingbird	29
Sage Thrasher	
Brown Thrasher	
European Starling	19066
American Pipit	293
Cedar Waxwing	24

820	1861	0	67
0	1	0	5
28	191	0	57
21	89	0	61
145	361	0	66
0	2	0	2
53	166	0	67
4	44	0	42
0	1	0	2
10	35	0	66
0	2	0	2
216	1805	0	67
13	167	0	48
0	5	0	6
83	264	0	67
0	1	0	1
7	50	0	58
6078	14410	0	67
1	13	0	27
5	46	0	40
0	1	0	1
2	23	0	34
16762	56154	0	67
108	718	0	49
185	1339	0	60

1322	1434	1139	10
0	0	0	0
110	191	66	10
53	89	26	10
207	309	142	10
0	2	0	1
65	83	41	10
11	44	1	10
0	1	0	2
18	31	11	10
0	0	0	0
308	634	132	10
22	104	0	9
0	3	0	2
119	252	40	10
0	0	0	0
12	28	3	10
8031	11607	5661	10
1	7	0	5
17	46	4	10
0	0	0	0
3	23	0	5
14110	20009	9481	10
202	571	2	10
315	1064	24	10

W A R B L E R S	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	3
Yellow-throated Warbler	
Pine Warbler	
Palm Warbler	
Black-and-white Warbler	
Louisana Waterthrush	

6	41	0	43
0	2	0	1
0	9	0	5
0	2	0	4
0	0	0	0
0	3	0	4

15	31	3	10
0	0	0	0
1	9	0	1
0	2	0	2
0	0	0	0
0	3	0	1

T A N A G E R S - H O U S E S P A R R O W S	
Scarlet Tanager	

0	2	0	1
---	---	---	---

0	0	0	0
---	---	---	---

6.4 x average

7.5 x average

1.7 x average

1.5 x average

1.8 x average

first was in '02

first was in '02

20% of average



# Buffalo Ornithological Society April Count Summaries - 1935-2003 & 1994-2003

Count number: 68	
Date: 4/13/03	
Eastern Towhee	10
American Tree Sparrow	184
Chipping Sparrow	92
Field Sparrow	36
Vesper Sparrow	5
Lark Bunting	
Savannah Sparrow	31
Grasshopper Sparrow	
Henslow's Sparrow	
Fox Sparrow	64
Song Sparrow	2046
Swamp Sparrow	105
White-throated Sparrow	127
Harris Sparrow	
White-crowned Sparrow	26
Dark-eyed Junco	1613
"Oregon Junco"	
unspecified sparrows	
Lapland Longspur	6
Snow Bunting	
Northern Cardinal	822
Red-winged Blackbird	5909
Eastern Meadowlark	90
Western Meadowlark	
Rusty Blackbird	333
Brewer's Blackbird	
Common Grackle	5516
Brown-headed Cowbird	1023
unspecified icterids	
Pine Grosbeak	
Purple Finch	170
House Finch	536
Red Crossbill	
White-winged Crossbill	
unspecified crossbills	
Common Redpoll	
Hoary Redpoll	
Pine Siskin	
American Goldfinch	870
Evening Grosbeak	
House Sparrow	1443
unspecified birds	
<b>Total Species</b>	139
<b>Total Individuals</b>	229114
<b>Number of Observers</b>	257

1935 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/68
13	58	0	59
404	2234	0	66
39	360	0	54
39	207	0	62
63	303	0	65
0	1	0	1
53	241	0	60
0	1	0	2
0	1	0	1
28	165	0	65
2058	5841	0	67
35	221	0	62
52	299	0	52
0	1	0	1
9	84	0	45
1830	7034	0	67
0	1	0	1
0	10	0	2
6	200	0	13
21	500	0	20
358	1143	0	65
12814	79382	0	67
412	1666	0	67
0	1	0	4
263	1234	0	66
0	9	0	3
9171	45600	0	67
1859	7375	0	67
46	3100	0	1
1	36	0	9
94	354	0	60
421	3454	0	28
6	117	0	21
2	32	0	10
0	2	0	1
124	2602	0	30
0	2	0	2
93	3157	0	36
430	1633	0	65
501	3277	0	45
2461	5840	0	67
2	70	0	3
118	148	44	68
140060	279748	4345	68
148	307	23	61

1994 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/10
16	42	7	10
263	722	102	10
113	360	26	10
30	82	14	10
12	22	4	10
0	0	0	0
56	216	16	10
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
33	64	9	10
1851	2340	1166	10
65	221	11	10
85	176	32	10
0	0	0	0
12	26	4	10
2122	3567	1076	10
0	0	0	0
1	10	0	2
4	30	0	4
3	30	0	2
688	1143	489	10
9415	23039	4578	10
159	256	85	10
0	0	0	0
506	1234	138	10
0	0	0	0
6363	8636	3452	10
1442	2669	730	10
0	0	0	0
0	1	0	1
160	260	92	10
882	1664	536	10
2	12	0	3
0	4	0	1
0	0	0	0
64	511	0	6
0	0	0	0
7	19	0	7
637	870	343	10
244	750	0	6
1547	2157	1222	10
12	70	0	2
137	148	129	10
167416	229114	121276	10
244	269	226	10

1.9 x average

2.2 x average

## GROUP SUMMARIES: Number of Individuals

Loons and Grebes	1797
Herons	886
Ducks, Geese and Swans	104360
Diurnal Birds of Prey	813
Game and Marsh Birds	613
Shorebirds	485
Jaegers, Gulls, and Terns	60441
Owls	26
Woodpeckers	931
Flycatchers	134
Vireos	
Jays, Crows, and Ravens	3113
Swallows	600
Chickadees to Gnatcatchers	1810
Thrushes	7048

276	1797	1	68
210	886	2	68
46916	117294	4260	68
443	1485	45	68
370	1572	3	68
529	1909	2	68
26884	117264	2	68
20	44	1	68
577	1832	2	68
123	458	0	67
0	1	0	1
2643	6240	0	67
723	6877	0	65
1310	3442	6	68
6168	14470	5	68

561	1797	124	10
508	886	320	10
49788	104360	28278	10
718	1168	349	10
734	1572	350	10
571	894	405	10
51655	82121	30672	10
27	34	19	10
900	1620	392	10
238	437	131	10
0	1	0	1
3936	4797	3113	10
1593	3355	505	10
2116	2653	1808	10
8162	11650	5772	10



Buffalo Ornithological Society April Count Summaries - 1935-2003 & 1994-2003

Count number:	68
Date:	4/13/03
Mimic Thrushes	30
Warblers	3
Sparrows and allies	4345
Cardinals and allies	822
Blackbirds and allies	12871
Finches and allies	1576
Foreign Introductions*	22066
Native Non-Passerines	174213
Native Passerines	32835

1935 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/68
8	76	0	48
6	43	0	44
4650	13883	0	67
358	1143	0	65
24565	118621	0	67
1670	7961	0	67
20089	61922	0	67
77246	184698	4325	68
42724	135068	20	68

1994 - 2003			
Ave	Max	Min	Rec
Count	Count	Count	/10
22	76	5	10
16	33	3	10
4668	5271	3855	10
688	1143	489	10
17884	33828	9751	10
1997	3377	1543	10
17069	23491	13164	10
108404	174213	70405	10
41937	60100	32835	10

GROUP SUMMARIES:		Number of Species			
Loons and Grebes	5	4	6	1	68
Herons	4	3	5	1	68
Ducks, Geese and Swans	29	25	29	17	68
Diurnal Birds of Prey	12	9	13	7	68
Game and Marsh Birds	5	4	7	1	68
Shorebirds	6	6	10	1	68
Jaegers, Gulls, and Terns	10	6	11	1	68
Owls	4	4	7	1	68
Woodpeckers	7	6	7	2	68
Flycatchers	1	1	2	0	66
Vireos	0	0	1	0	5
Jays, Crows, and Ravens	3	2	3	0	67
Swallows	4	3	6	0	65
Chickadees to Gnatcatchers	10	8	11	3	68
Thrushes	3	3	4	1	68
Mimic Thrushes	2	2	3	0	49
Warblers	1	1	4	0	45
Sparrows and allies	13	11	15	0	67
Cardinals and allies	1	1	1	0	65
Blackbirds and allies	5	5	6	0	68
Finches and allies	3	5	9	0	68
Foreign Introductions*	4	4	5	0	68
Native Non-Passerines	85	69	86	37	68
Native Passerines	50	45	61	7	68

5	6	4	10
4	5	2	10
27	29	24	10
10	13	9	10
5	7	4	10
7	9	5	10
9	11	7	10
5	7	4	10
7	7	6	10
1	2	1	10
0	1	0	5
3	3	3	10
4	6	1	10
9	11	8	10
3	3	3	10
2	3	1	10
1	4	1	10
13	13	12	10
1	1	1	10
5	5	5	10
5	7	3	10
4	4	4	10
81	85	74	10
52	61	48	10

\* Includes Gray Partridge, Ring-necked Pheasant, Rock Dove, Starling and House Sparrow

- LEGEND:  = highest count
- = lowest count
- = 1st, 2nd or 3rd record
- = notable change in average



BOS website  
<http://birds.rtpi.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

Return Service Requested

## July – September Calendar

**June through August** BOS members are encouraged to participate in the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche (Email: [drosche@juno.com](mailto:drosche@juno.com) or 652-8409).

**July 27: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

**August 17: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you have questions or would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker or Lynne Landon at (716) 745-9129 or email: [TerryYonker@cs.com](mailto:TerryYonker@cs.com)

**August 31: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie** for shorebirds (Buff-breasted Sandpiper) and other early migrants. Leader: Mike Hamilton. Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there

**September 7: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach** for warblers and shorebirds. Leader: TBA. Meet at 7:30 AM in the Tifft N. P. parking lot. This is a half day trip.

**September 10: BOS Meeting. Members' Night.** Bring along your favorite stories/slides to share. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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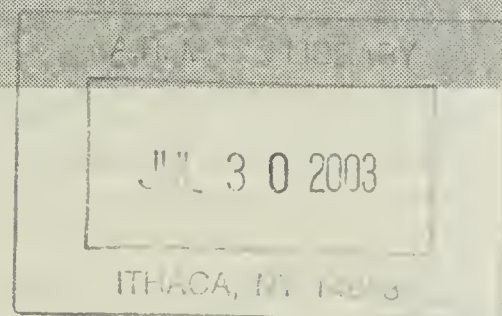
# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 69, No. 6 June, 2003



### THE MONTH: May

by Gerry Rising

May 2003 did not offer good conditions for birding. It was cold and rainy, continuing the pattern of lousy weather that hounded us through that uncomfortable winter. The average temperature for the month at the Buffalo Airport was 55.4° F, 1.6° below average. It felt worse to me: on only six days did the temperature rise above 70° while nine highs were in the 50s. Most lows were in the 40s with a 39° reading recorded on the 22nd. (My long johns weren't put away until June.) And there was also a heavy dose of rain — the month total of 5.4 inches was 62% above average for May. Overall a bad weather picture.

Add to that a serious problem with foliage. Given that weather, we had a right to expect late leaf development, but that brief spell of warmth in late April and the early May rains turned everything a lovely green, welcome to all except birders.

But it was May, after all, and records indicate that observers were out in force. Although most of the usual Big Days didn't turn out as well as usual, on one

Brendan Klick and Don Harris quite remarkably tied the state record. On the same day, May 18, the 67th BOS May Count set a new record for species. A further indication of the serious birding activity: it took the statisticians over five hours to work through this month's many excellent submissions.

As might be expected with all that fieldwork, a

number of rare species were turned up. This month's Eared Grebe was not recorded in Batavia as have most in the recent past; instead Mike Morgante found it in the Lewiston Reservoir. A Glossy Ibis was found by Klick and Harris in Tonawanda WMA. Meanwhile the hawk watches did well. Len DeFrancisco in Ripley turned up a spectacular two Mississippi Kites, ten days apart, as well as a Golden Eagle, while Fran Rew had five and Bill Watson four Sandhill Cranes at Hamburg. Susan and Tom O'Donnell had another crane at Oak Orchard. Bob Andrie observed a Red-necked Phalarope characteristically spinning in a shallow pool in Eden and the O'Donnells also had two Willets in Olcott. A Western Sandpiper was recorded by Mike Zebehazy in Fort Erie and two late gulls were also recorded on the count: Lesser Black-backed and Iceland, both by Klick and Harris.

Good news on the breeding front: the one Sedge Wren found first by the O'Donnells at Iroquois would be joined by at least one apparent partner in early June.

Continuing the pattern of recent years state-wide, about as many Golden-winged/Blue-winged Warbler hybrids were recorded as Golden-wings. The rare *hypochrysea* Palm Warbler subspecies was turned up with a group of the more usual *palmarum*s by Klick in Newfane. Only two Prothonotary Warblers were reported this month, one by Jim Berry in Chautauqua County, the other in Count Section 10, but a Connecticut Warbler, especially rare in spring, was found by Klick and Harris



59	<b>The Month</b> by Gerry Rising
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"along a small creek on the Yates-Carlton Townline Road a mile south of Lake Ontario." And an especially rare visitor from the south, a Blue Grosbeak, appeared briefly at the Andries' feeder in Eden Valley. Three Clay-colored Sparrows were found in a "tree plantation on the corner of Hilliker and Keller Roads in the Town of Yorkshire, Cattaraugus County" by Mike DeSha. (So began what was to become a flood of June reports of this species in western New York.) Finally, Orchard Orioles are doing well in the region, among the records a remarkable four recorded at Rock Point Provincial Park on the 25th by D'Anna and others.

It is harder to draw conclusions about more common species because our records

focus on rarities once we have ticked off a species for the year. (In this regard, I'm always embarrassed when I add my first grackle to my annual list.) But readers are referred to Bob and Donna DeLeon's summaries of high and low May Counts in this issue. I am particularly concerned about the numbers of Eastern Meadowlarks. While Bobolinks are increasing, meadowlarks are apparently losing ground rapidly. On the other hand, Red-bellied Woodpeckers are doing very well. This southern species seems to have come through that nasty winter far better than other half-hardies like Carolina Wren.

Finally, Stephen McCabe has taken excellent photographs of one of a pair of Monk Parakeets in Hamburg. To my best knowledge, this is the first record of this species locally in recent years. While we might normally welcome new visitors to the region, these parakeets are another matter. They are problem birds. On his website devoted to them, Erik Huebner tells us,

"In South America where it is native, the Monk Parakeet is known as a major agricultural pest. Large



Monk Parakeet Photo courtesy of S. McCabe

flocks of parakeets descend on ripening cereal and citrus fruits and eat the seeds and grains. Estimated annual crop losses are reported to be from 2 to 15 percent, and may be up to 45 percent (Bull, 1977)."

Brought north as

pets, some have inevitably escaped and turn up in the wild. (I occasionally hear a neighbor's pet parrot screaming from nearby trees, but it is some other species and he soon recaptures it.) It is my understanding that conservation officers quietly "remove" Monk Parakeets from rural areas; however, at least one colony has formed in New York City where the birds have lasted for many years. As they say, stay tuned.

## Hamburg Hawk Watch: Spring 2003 Report

by Jim Landau

The National Weather Service in Buffalo described March as a true "Jeckyll and Hyde" month in Western New York. The unusually persistent cold of the long winter of 2002-03 continued unabated through the first two weeks, but gave way to a sudden turnaround to spring-like warmth for the month's second half. This was echoed in this month's hawk flights as well, with numbers of birds picking up by the middle of the month. Turkey Vulture was the dominant species in March (4789), with the 28<sup>th</sup> logging 1109 TV's of the 1307 individuals seen that day. Red-shouldered Hawk (198) and Red-tailed Hawk (1091) also made their strongest showing this month. March 25th provided the season's only Northern Goshawk.

After a rather bleak first week, April turned out fairly sunny with moderate winds coming out of the northeast rather than the southwest. This gave the watch a mixed month of observation, with nine days reporting less than fifty raptors and seventeen days tallying into three digits. April also provided our largest flight of the season on the 19<sup>th</sup> with 2,448 raptors counted. Broad-winged Hawk made up the majority



(1905) that day and was also the high count species (4671) for the month. In addition, April saw this season's high counts for Osprey (124), Northern Harrier (66), Sharp-shinned Hawk (629), Cooper's Hawk (80), Rough-legged Hawk (16) and American Kestrel (68).

The cool spring weather continued for the final month of the watch. May rainfall was abundant and frequent. And although there were some good flight days, rain and northerly winds conspired against a hoped for late-month immature Broad-winged Hawk flight.

While the season failed to provide any "goodies" such as kites or Swainson's Hawks, this season's counts for Turkey Vulture (8872), Osprey (151), Golden Eagle (4), Merlin (8) and Peregrine Falcon (7) are worth noting. Just where all those Turkey Vultures are headed merits some study, but their range expansion has been likened to that of the Northern Cardinal. According to Mike Street (Central Flyway Coordinator for Hawk Migration Association of North America) TV's were virtually unknown in Ontario Province 30-40 years ago, and now they are regular to Thunder Bay in the north and have been seen as far east as Quebec City.

61 non-raptor species were seen at the hawk watch, highlighted by Great Egret, Tundra Swan, Sandhill Crane, Little Gull and Bobolink, to name but a few.

This season benefited from 75 days of coverage, with only two scheduled days missed due to weather. A total of 394.8 hours of watch time were logged, which resulted in 17411 raptors and vultures of 15 species tallied – a new record high of individuals for the watch. It was only possible due to the commitment of a dedicated group of volunteers. Thanks and a "job well done" to Bob Andrlle, Bruce Chilton, Lewis Crowell, Mike Davis, Ed Fuchs, Mike Hamilton, Don Harris, Linda Holmes, Alec Humann, Sandy Radigan, Fran Rew, Bill Watson and Mike Zebehazy. A special note of thanks to Bob Andrlle and Fran Rew, who seemed to be helping out at the watch almost every day, providing much valued guidance and perspective.

Additional support and fellowship was provided by numerous visitors who lent their birding skills when things were busy and their conversational skills when things were not. Thanks to Richard and Bobby Byron, Tom Connare, Willie D'Anna, Bob Deleon, Brendan Klick, Mike Morgante, Karen Landau, Jim Pawlicki, Betsy Potter, Jeff Reed, May Ruhl, Dennis Russell, Steve Sewell, Jack Skalicky, Paul and Tina Summer-skill, Joe Thill, Paul and Nancy Vigyikan, Barb Walker and Peter Yoerg. Apologies to anyone I may have inadvertently omitted.

This spring also saw a major change in the way hawk watches report their observations to HMANA (Hawk Migration Association of North America). All watches now enter their daily (and hourly) count data over the internet. This provides more timely collection and analysis of data and also allows for daily reports to be sent as emails to local "birding community" internet listserves such as Geneseebirds. Much excellent information about hawkwatches and hawk migration can be found at [www.hmana.org](http://www.hmana.org).



The table below outlines the Hamburg Hawk Watch Spring 2003 season month by month. Detailed monthly and daily reports for many watches, including Hamburg, can be viewed at [www.hawkcount.org](http://www.hawkcount.org).

2003 SEASON	MAR	APR	MAY	Total
Hours/month	157.8	162.8	74.3	394.8
Days per month	30	29	16	75
Turkey Vulture	4789	3602	481	8872
Osprey	3	124	24	151
Bald Eagle	12	12	5	29
Northern Harrier	21	66	14	101
Sharp-shinned Hawk	141	629	119	889
Cooper's Hawk	53	80	27	160
Northern Goshawk	1	0	0	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	198	17	1	216
Broad-winged Hawk	0	4671	327	4998
Red-tailed Hawk	1091	572	116	1779
Rough-legged Hawk	12	16	1	29
Golden Eagle	1	3	0	4
American Kestrel	23	68	3	94
Merlin	2	6	0	8
Peregrine Falcon	2	3	2	7
Unid. Raptor	28	32	13	73
TOTAL	6377	9901	1133	17411

Anyone with questions or comments regarding this year's watch or interest in volunteering for next spring's watch can contact me at 9195 State Road, Colden, NY 14033 (941-3869 or email [kjlandau@local-net.com](mailto:kjlandau@local-net.com))



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
<u>Red-throated Loon</u>	4	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Loon	4; 12	1; 1	Lewiston Res.; Tift NP	Klick, Harris; Watson
"	17	5	Golden Hill SP	Morgante
"	17	1	Iroquois NWR	Pawlicki et al
Horned Grebe	3	1	Lewiston Res.	Morgante
"	15	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	3	1	Lewiston Res.	Morgante
D.-crested Cormorant	1	800	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
"	4; 22	205; 174	Motor I.	Burch
"	8; 19	164; 159	Motor I.	Watson
"	23	132	Buffalo Harbor	Watson
"	26	3	Eggertsville	D & D Suggs
American Bittern	4; 17	1; 3	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	9	1; 8	Newstead; Tonawanda WMA	Klick; Klick, Harris
"	10	1	Newfane	Morgante
* Least Bittern	11F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	17	2	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Great Blue Heron	8; 17	106; 29	Motor I.	Watson
Great Egret	2; 8; 19	16; 13; 10	Motor I.	Watson
"	3 - 31	1 - 3	Tonawanda	Hess
"	4	7	Motor I.	Burch
"	12; 17	1; 1	Tift NP	Watson
"	25	3	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Black-cr. Night-Heron	4; 22	65; 4	Motor I.	Burch
"	8; 17	114; 8	Motor I.	Watson
* Brant	25F	10	Tonawanda	Hess
Mute Swan	4	2	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	17	2	Olcott	Morgante
Tundra Swan	4L	2	Oak Orchard WMA	Klick, Harris
American Wigeon	15	8	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	17	4	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
American Black Duck	17	4	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Northern Shoveler	15	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	17	4	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Green-winged Teal	8	2	Tift NP	Watson
"	9	62	Iroquois NWR	Klick
"	17	5	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Redhead	4; 17	4; 6	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	9	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick
Ring-necked Duck	1	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	3	6	Iroquois NWR	Pawlicki et al



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	15L	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Greater Scaup	13	23	Niagara Falls	Klick
"	17L	8	Goat I.	Morgante
Lesser Scaup	15	34	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	17	2	Goat I.	Morgante
White-winged Scoter	8	1120	Porter	Klick
"	10	600	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	17	4	Four Mile Creek SP	Morgante
Black or Surf Scoter	10	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna
Long-tailed Duck	10	1300	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	14	60	Somerset	Klick
"	17L	20; 200	Golden Hill SP; Four Mile Creek SP	Morgante
Bufflehead	13; 17L	2; 1	Niagara Falls; Goat I.	Klick; Morgante
Common Merganser	8	22	Porter	Klick
"	13; 17	2; 4	Niagara Falls; Goat I.	Klick; Morgante
Ruddy Duck	4; 17	8; 4	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	4	12	Oak Orchard WMA	Klick, Harris
"	4; 14	48; 7	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris; Klick
"	15	63	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Osprey	1	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	4	2 (at nest)	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	7; 14	1; 2	Persia; Pt. Breeze(L. Ont)	Skalicky; Klick
"	15	1 (at nest)	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	17	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	29	2	Gaines	Klick
* <u>Mississippi Kite</u>	20; 30	1; 1	Ripley Hawkwatch	DeFrancisco
Bald Eagle	4	2	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	15	1 imm.	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	15	1 imm.	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Andrle et al
"	21; 22	2; 1	Machias	DeSha
"	25	2-3 imm.	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	4 imm.	Allegany Indian Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-shouldered Hawk	2	1	Tifft NP	DiTommaso, Watson, Potter
Broad-winged Hawk	1	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	9; 24	2; 1	Alfred	Brooks
"	14; 17	1; 1	Pt. Breeze; Somerset	Klick; Morgante
"	18; 26	1; 1	French Creek	Berry
Rough-legged Hawk	12L	1	French Creek	Berry
<u>Golden Eagle</u>	30	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	DeFrancisco
Merlin	4	1	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	<u>17L</u>	1	Lewiston	Morgante
Peregrine Falcon	6; 7; 8	1	UB South Campus	Yoerg
Sora	4	1	Tifft NP	Watson (BOS)
"	4; 17	1; 3	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	9	1	W. Almond	Brooks
Common Moorhen	4; 17	1; 8	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	19	4	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	25	1	Oak Orchard WMA	S O'Donnell
Black-bellied Plover	25F	1	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* Semipalmated Plover	11F; 19	5; 10	French Creek	Berry
"	15; 17	2; 2	Batavia WWTP; Wilson	Watson; Morgante
Greater Yellowlegs	12	5	French Creek	Berry
"	17L	1	Newfane	Morgante
Lesser Yellowlegs	14	47	Yates	Klick
"	11; 19	13; 10	French Creek	Berry
Solitary Sandpiper	1	4	Westfield & Ripley	Morgante
"	7	2	Persia	Skalicky
"	11; 22; 24	2; 1; 2	Eden	Andrle
"	15	11	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	15	2; 1	Lakeside MP; E. Aurora	Andrle; Holmes
* Willet	<u>1F</u>	2	Olcott	S O'Donnell
* Spotted Sandpiper	1F	2	Ripley	Morgante
"	1F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	12	3	French Creek	Berry
"	15	14	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Upland Sandpiper	4	4	Sheldon	Klick, Harris
"	27	2	Shelby	Klick
* Whimbrel	25F	179	Morgan's Pt. - Ft. Erie, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	25F	30	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Ruddy Turnstone	25F	5	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	25	6	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
* Red Knot	25F	6	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
* Sanderling	<u>14F</u>	2	Somerset	Klick
* Semipalm. Sandpiper	15F	5	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	25	5	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	25	3	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	2	French Creek	Berry
* Least Sandpiper	4F	3	Yates	Morgante
"	11; 25	3; 15	French Creek	Berry
"	14	8	Yates	Klick
"	15	28; 35	Batavia WWTP; Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	26	2	Machias	DeSha
* White-r. Sandpiper	24F	1	Times Beach	Klick
"	25	1	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	25	1	Somerset	Klick
Pectoral Sandpiper	25L	2	French Creek	Berry
Dunlin	14; 17	2; 1	Yates; Porter	Klick; Morgante
"	24	4	Times Beach	Klick
"	25	56	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	25	6	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	1	French Creek	Berry
* Red-necked Phalarope	<u>24</u>	1	Eden	Andrle et al
Bonaparte's Gull	13	25	Niagara Falls	Klick
Lesser Black-b. Gull	<u>1</u>	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
Caspian Tern	1; 30	20; 57	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
"	14	9	Pt. Breeze	Klick
* Black Tern	4F; 17	8; 6	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	9	15	Iroquois NWR	Klick
"	15	9	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* <u>Monk Parakeet</u> (origin unknown)	4	2	Hamburg	McCabe
* Black-billed Cuckoo	9F	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick
"	23	1	Franklinville	DeSha
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	28F	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Klick
"	29	1	Ridgeway	Klick
Common Nighthawk	17	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
* Ruby-t. Hummingbird	1F	1	Westfield	Morgante
"	2	1	Eden Valley	Andrle
"	2	1	Alfred	Brooks
Red-headed Wdpkr.	1	3; 1	Chautauqua; Pt. Gratiot	Morgante; D'Anna et al
"	3	1	Lakeside MP	Andrle
"	4	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	4	4	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	6 - 31	1	Youngstown	Landon, Yonker
"	8	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon
"	14	1	Lakeside Beach SP	Klick
"	25	2	Ft. Erie, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
* Eastern Wood-Pewee	13F	1	Joseph Davis SP	Klick
"	17	1	Goat I.	Morgante
Acadian Flycatcher	21	1	Ridgeway	Klick
"	24; 25; 26	1; 1; 2	French Creek	Berry
Alder Flycatcher	19F; 24; 25	1; 1; 1	French Creek	Berry
* Willow Flycatcher	<u>14F</u>	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick
"	17	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
* Least Flycatcher	1F	1	Pt. Gratiot	Morgante
"	2	1; 1	Tifft NP	Chilton; Potter, DiTommaso
* Gr. Cr. Flycatcher	1F	1; 1	Westfield	Morgante; D'Anna
"	1F	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	2	2	Tifft NP	Watson, Potter, DiTommaso
* Eastern Kingbird	1F	1; 1	Westfield; Pt. Gratiot	Morgante
"	3	1	Bethany	Beattie
* White-eyed Vireo	4F	1	Tifft NP	Andrle et al
"	6	1	Tifft NP	Davis, Landau, Skalicky
"	8;15	1; 1	Westfield	Morgante
* Yellow-thr. Vireo	1F	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	10	3	Tonawanda WMA	D'Anna, Potter
Blue-headed Vireo	1	5; 2	Amherst SP	Yoerg; Klick
"	1	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
* Warbling Vireo	1F	1	Westfield	D'Anna
"	1F	2	Amherst SP	Klick
"	2	4	Tifft NP	Watson
* Philadelphia Vireo	16F	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon
"	17	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	24	1; 2	Goat I.; French Creek	Potter, D'Anna; Berry
"	25L	1	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	D'Anna et al
* Red-eyed Vireo	8	1	Ripley	D'Anna
"	11	1; 1	French Creek; E. Aurora	Berry; Holmes
"	25	6	Alfred	Brooks
Common Raven	15	1	<u>Carlton Hill MUA</u>	Klick



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	15	1	Attica Res.	Klick
"	26	2	Allegany Indian Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
* Purple Martin	4F	8	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	1	Williamsville	Pawlicki
N. Rough-w. Swallow	16	20	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon
"	21; 24	50; 50	Goat I.	Roberson
* Bank Swallow	1F	1; 1	Pt. Gratiot	Morgante; D'Anna et al
"	28	39	Barre	Klick
Cliff Swallow	4	61	Niagara Falls	Klick, Harris
Brown Creeper	11; 17	1; 1	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	11	1	French Creek	Berry
Carolina Wren	1 - 30	12 records	Various locs. - WNY	Morgante
Winter Wren	3; 10	2; 1	Ward; Alfred	Brooks
"	10	1	Newfane	Morgante
* Sedge Wren	26F	1	Iroquois NWR	S O'Donnell
Marsh Wren	4	2	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Golden-cr. Kinglet	11	1	French Creek	Berry
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	14	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	17L	1	Golden Hill SP	Morgante
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	1	4	Pt. Gratiot	Morgante
"	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Potter, DiTommaso
"	3	2	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	4	2	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
* Veery	2F	1	Tifft NP	Chilton
"	5	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Gray-cheeked Thrush	24F	1	Ft. Niagara SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	24F; 25	1; 1	Buffalo	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25; 30L	1; 5	Goat I.; Buffalo	Roberson; Yoerg
* Swainson's Thrush	15F	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	17	1; 1	Golden Hill SP; Goat I.	Morgante; Roberson
"	30	25	Buffalo	Yoerg
Hermit Thrush	3	3	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	6	1	Forest Lawn Cem.	Skalicky
"	14	1	Yates	Klick
"	26	2	French Creek	Berry
* Wood Thrush	1F	1	Ripley	Morgante
"	1F	2	Amherst SP	Pawlicki, Yoerg
"	1F	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	3	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Gray Catbird	1	2; 1	Westfield	Morgante; D'Anna
"	1	2	Amherst SP	Pawlicki, Yoerg
Northern Mockingbird	10; 17	1; 1	Newfane	Morgante
"	14	1	Yates	Klick
"	23	1	Buffalo Port Terminal	Andrle
American Pipit	1; 3	8; 1	Westfield, Ripley; Tifft NP	Morgante
"	4; 7	4; 7	Tonawanda WMA; E & E HQ	Morgante
"	8	51	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew, Andrle
"	14; 15	60; 1	Yates; E. Aurora	Klick; Holmes
"	17L	20	L. Ontario plain	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* Blue-winged Warbler	1F	2; 1	Westfield	Morgante; D'Anna
"	1F	1; 1	Amherst SP; E. Aurora	Yoerg; Holmes
"	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Potter, DiTommaso
* Golden-wing. Warbler	3F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	10	1	Newfane	Morgante
"	11; 17	1; 1	Somerset	Morgante
"	26; 27	1; 1	Medina; Shelby	Klick
"	28	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick
* Brewster's Warbler	8F	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Zebehazy
"	9	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick
"	11; 17	1; 1	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
* Tennessee Warbler	11F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
* Orange-cr. Warbler	2F; 8	1; 1	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon
"	4	1	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7; 13	1; 1	Goat I.	D'Anna; Potter
"	17L	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Morgante
Nashville Warbler	1	4; 3	Westfield & Ripley	Morgante; D'Anna
"	1	6; 2	Amherst SP	Yoerg; Klick
"	2	6	Tifft NP	Watson, Potter, DiTommaso
* Northern Parula	1F	1; 1	Amherst SP; E. Aurora	Klick; Holmes
"	2; 8; 12; 17	2; 1; 1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	2	1	Tifft NP	Potter, DiTommaso
"	4	2	Amherst SP	Pawlicki et al
"	6	2; 1	Goat I.	Potter; Roberson
"	6	1	Forest Lawn Cem.	Skalicky
"	17; 30L	3; 1	Goat I.	Roberson
"	21	1	Humphrey	DeSha
Yellow Warbler	1	6	Westfield & Ripley	Morgante
"	1; 11	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
* Chestnut-s. Warbler	1F	2; 1	Westfield; Goat I.	Morgante; Potter
"	1F	2	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	1F; 11; 14	1; 1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	3	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Magnolia Warbler	1	1	Goat I.	Potter
"	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Potter, DiTommaso
"	2	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Potter, DiTommaso
* Cape May Warbler	6F	2	Tifft NP	D'Anna
"	14	1	Carlton	Klick
"	21; 25L	1; 6	Goat I.	Roberson
* Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	1F	1; 1	Goat I.; Forest Lawn Cem.	Potter; Hess
"	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Potter, DiTommaso
"	8; 16L	1; 2	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon
Yellow-r. Warbler	25	1	Oak Orchard WMA	S & T O'Donnell
* Blackburnian Warbler	1F	1; 1	Goat I.; E. Aurora	Potter; Holmes
"	1F	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	3	4	Bethany	Beattie
Pine Warbler	8; 15	2; 1	Olcott; Orangeville	Klick



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	17	4	Various locs. - WNY	Morgante
"	28	2	Barre	Klick
* Prairie Warbler	15F	1	Eagle	Klick
"	25	2	Alfred	Brooks
"	30	1	Ashford	Klick, Sowinski
Palm Warbler	15; 17L	1; 1	Goat I.	Roberson
"	17L	1	Tifft NP	Watson, McKale, Johnson
"	17L	1	L. Ontario plain	Morgante
* <i>D. p. hypochrysea</i>	8	1	Newfane	Klick
* Bay-breasted Warbler	8F; 24	1; 1	Goat I.	Roberson
"	10	2	Tonawanda WMA	Potter
* Blackpoll Warbler	11F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
"	26	2; 6	Amherst SP; Salamanca	Morgante; Yoerg, Henderson
* Cerulean Warbler	9F	4	Oak Orchard WMA	Klick
"	9F	1	Newstead	Klick
"	11; 17	1; 1	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Black-and-white Warb.	1	2	Chautauqua	Morgante, D'Anna
"	1	6	Amherst SP	Yoerg
* American Redstart	4F	1; 1	Tifft NP; Attica	Watson; Klick, Harris
"	6	1; 3	Tifft NP	D'Anna; Davis, Landau, Skalicky
Prothonotary Warbler	25F	1	<u>French Creek</u>	Berry
* Ovenbird	1F	1; 1	Westfield; Goat I.	Morgante; Potter
"	1F	4	Ripley; Pt. Gratiot	D'Anna
"	1F	1; 1	Amherst SP	Yoerg; Klick
"	3	1	Tifft NP	Watson
* Northern Waterthrush	1F	1	Westfield	Morgante
"	1F	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	2	1	Tifft NP	Chilton
La. Waterthrush	4; 26	1; 1	French Creek	Berry
"	4	1	Chautauqua	Yoerg, Henderson
"	4	3	Attica	Klick, Harris
"	14	1	Humphrey	DeSha
"	25	2	Allegany Indian Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
* Mourning Warbler	10F	1	Portland	Mosher
"	30	1	Goat I.	Roberson
* Common Yellowthroat	1F	2	Westfield	Morgante
"	1F	1; 1	Westfield; Pt. Gratiot	D'Anna
"	1F; 14	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	4	2	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
* Hooded Warbler	1F	1	Westfield	Morgante
"	4	1	Westfield	Yoerg, Henderson
"	4	4	Attica	Klick, Harris
"	15	1	Williamsville	Pawlicki
"	26	10	Allegany Indian Res., Salamanca	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	4	E. Aurora	Holmes
* Wilson's Warbler	14F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	16	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon
"	26L	1	Salamanca	Yoerg, Henderson
* Canada Warbler	10F	1	Tonawanda WMA	D'Anna, Potter



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	11	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
* Yellow-br. Chat	8F	1	Ripley	Morgante
* Scarlet Tanager	1F	1	Goat I.	Potter
"	1F	1	Forest Lawn Cem.	Hess
"	1F	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	6	1	Goat I.	Roberson
Vesper Sparrow	4; 28	2; 1	Barre	Klick, Harris; Klick
"	8; 17	1; 1	Westfield; Newfane	Morgante
"	15	1	Wethersfield	Klick
"	25; 30	1; 1	Andover; Humphrey	Brooks; DeSha
Grasshopper Sparrow	10; 17	1; 1	Newfane	Morgante
"	15	1; 1	Alexander; Carlton Hill MUA	Klick
Henslow's Sparrow	19F;20;23;26	2; 2; 1; 1	Lancaster	Ratajczak, Uzunov
"	27	11	Lancaster	Morgante
Fox Sparrow	3L	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
* Lincoln's Sparrow	2F	3	Tifft NP	Potter, Watson, DiTom- maso
"	4 - 11	1	Pomfret	Moshers
"	17L	1; 1	Golden Hill SP; Goat I.	Morgante; Roberson
White-thr. Sparrow	4	4	Bethany; Goat I.	Beattie; Roberson
"	23L	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	30	1	Ashford	Klick, Sowinski
White-cr. Sparrow	26L	1	Golden Hill SP	S & T O'Donnell
* Rose-br. Grosbeak	1F	1; 1	Goat I.; Bethany	Potter; Beattie
"	1F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
* <u>Blue Grosbeak</u>	5	1	Eden Valley	Andrle
* Indigo Bunting	7F; 8	2; 1	Persia; Eden Valley	Skalicky; Andrle
* Bobolink	1F	8; 14	Westfield & Ripley	Morgante; D'Anna
"	3	8	Bethany	Beattie
Rusty Blackbird	5	5	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	6L	3	Tifft NP	D'Anna
* Orchard Oriole	5F	1	<u>Wethersfield</u>	Junkin
"	5F - 14	1	<u>Eden Valley</u>	Andrle
"	5F	1	<u>E. Aurora</u>	Holmes
"	9	1	<u>Eden Valley</u>	Andrle
"	11; 17	2; 2	Somerset	Morgante
"	25	4	Rock Point PP	D'Anna et al
"	26	2	Somerset	S & T O'Donnell
* Baltimore Oriole	1F	1; 1	Eden Valley; Goat I.	Andrle; Potter
"	1F	7; 1	Westfield & Ripley	Morgante; D'Anna
"	1F	1	Forest Lawn Cem.	Hess
"	1F	1; 1	Amherst SP; E. Aurora	Yoerg; Holmes
"	2	2	Tifft NP	Chilton

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded: 180**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue, including May Count: 77**

**Total for the year 2003: (+ one from April: C. Moorhen) 258**

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.



## Tifft Nature Preserve Field Trip

by Bill Watson

Sunday, May 4th was a beautiful clear day with temperatures close to 40 °F at 7:00 a.m., but warming up to a pleasant 62 °F by noon. There was a spectacular fallout of migrants on May 1st and 2nd, but the pleasant weather allowed many of these migrants to leave, and their numbers had decreased from the previous days.

Under the capable leadership of Bill Bogacki some twenty birders left the Tifft Nature Preserve parking lot at 7:00 a.m. On the Mosquito Junction Boardwalk we saw our first Green Heron, first of three Yellow Warblers, Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Black-and white Warbler.

Along Warbler Walk we heard Sora and observed one of many Black-throated Green Warblers. It was here that Bob Andrie and Wayne Gall found a first year *White-eyed Vireo*. On Old Tifft Street the group enjoyed looking at a Least Flycatcher and a Brown Thrasher, and Ed Fuchs found Hooded Warbler, Northern Waterthrush and Common Yellow-throat. On Snakeroot Trail we watched Eastern Towhee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Palm Warbler, and had splendid looks at a male American Red-start so busy hawking insects that it ignored the birders observing it from only five to ten yards away.

At Heritage Boardwalk there was a persistently calling Virginia Rail. As we left Heritage Boardwalk there was Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and Downy Woodpecker all in the *same* tree. Here we also studied Ovenbird, Nashville Warbler, Warbling Vireo and had up close eye level looks at a brilliant Chestnut-sided Warbler that rivaled the views we had of the American Redstart. At Lisa Pond there were Black-crowned Night-Herons, Great Blue Herons, Pied-billed Grebe, and two Wild Turkeys with four White-tailed Deer. We ended the half-day field trip with 13 warbler species and a total of 60 species. It was a most enjoyable day observing birds, renewing old acquaintances, and making new friends.

## Great Egret Color Banding at Motor Island

by Bill Watson

On June 16, 2003, twenty-one nestling Great Egrets (one more than last year) were banded at the heron colony on Motor Island by Dr. D. V. Chip Weseloh, Wildlife Biologist for Canadian Wildlife Service-Ontario Region; Mark Kandel, Senior Wildlife Biolo-

gist, and John Curtis, Senior Wildlife Technician, both of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and me.

Once again I will be asking for birders to look for Great Egrets with RED BANDS WITH WHITE LETTER-NUMBERS ABOVE THE KNEE OF THE LEFT LEG AND THE TRADITIONAL ALUMINUM BAND ABOVE THE ANKLE OF THE RIGHT LEG. The band code on the red band can usually be read with a spotting scope as the letter numbers are nearly an inch high.

Last year these birds were observed on July 27 and 31 at Cuylerville Greenway Pond in Livingston County, on August 8 at Como Park in Lancaster, on August 26 at Conneaut Harbor, Ohio, on September 1 and 2 at Montezuma NWR, and two were observed at the same location September 23. Oddly, no one reported any of them at Iroquois NWR.

This year the nestling egrets were generally younger and had a wider variety of ages. One of the nestlings was so mature that it could not be caught and banded. Others were too young to be banded. One nest contained two recently hatched nestlings and three eggs. The oldest of the banded birds should start fledging at the end of June and Buffalo Ornithological Society members should start looking for them in Western New York and Ontario near the Niagara River. During July, some fledglings will stop using Motor Island for a night roost and start their summer dispersal. Many of the adults started their post breeding dispersal at the end of June this year.

If you see any of these birds, please try to record their band letters and numbers. Report all sightings of Great Egrets with red color bands to at least one of the following locations.

D. V. Chip Weseloh  
Canadian Wildlife Service-Ontario Region  
4905 Dufferin St.  
Downsview, Ontario  
M3H 5T4  
Phone: 416-739-5846  
email: chip.weseloh@ec.gc.ca.

or

Mark Kandel  
NYSDEC  
270 Michigan Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
Phone (716) 851-7010  
email: mxkandel@gw.dec.state.ny.us





Grasshopper Sparrow (5/30/03) Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna

## The New York State Checklist of Birds

by Gerry Rising

The 2003 Checklist of the Birds of New York State has been published by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. Its introduction states that it "includes all species for which acceptable specimen, photographic or written documentation exists" for the state as "approved by the Federation's New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC)." It includes 460 species.

The checklist is posted on the Federation website, [www.fnysbc.org/](http://www.fnysbc.org/), and copies are available in booklet form for \$1.00 from FNYSBC, Inc., PO Box 95, Durhamville, NY 13054.

Stuart Lawrence has also made copies in format that may be trimmed to booklet size available for computer download on his website at [www.walrus.com/~stuartwl/NYSChecklist.pdf](http://www.walrus.com/~stuartwl/NYSChecklist.pdf). Printing it in this format requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader program which is a free download from: [www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readmain.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readmain.html). Lawrence adds the following instructions to those downloading his file: "To print it as a booklet in Acrobat Reader, print the even pages only in reverse order, then load the pages into your printer in the appropriate orientation and print the odd pages in normal order. Staple at the center, fold and trim." After a couple of thwarted efforts, even I was able to follow these instructions to produce an excellent little checklist booklet.

## Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas Project

by Jack Skalicky

Alabama is not a particularly well-known birding destination, with possible exception of Dauphin Island. Thus when this author volunteered to atlas in the state there were few expectations. After only one season however, there have already been many rewards, not the least of which is an increased field knowledge of many species uncommon (or absent) in western New York. The Alabama BBA 2002 is organized like the New York State BBA, utilizing the "3 km x 3 km block" concept, similar breeding codes, and a five year plan. A former NYSBBA 1980 volunteer, Rick West, leads the project with assistance from eight regional coordinators. A major difference between Alabama and New York atlas projects is the expected coverage: NYSBBA 2000 will attempt to census all blocks statewide while the Alabama BBA 2002 anticipates coverage of only one in every twelve blocks, this mirroring the small number of volunteers.

The Alabama blocks surveyed by the author are located in the SE corner of the state, about 1.5 hours travel time from Tallahassee, FL. The habitat is a mosaic of farmland (mostly pasture and grain fields), pine and deciduous woodlands, streams, and wooded swamps.

The number of breeding bird species in this region of Alabama is slightly smaller than that in w. New York, however many hard-to-find species (in w. New York) can be common here in proper habitat. Take warblers as an example, playback of song recordings in most wooded river valleys, having a dense understory, will usually yield Swainson's and Kentucky Warblers (separating the Kentucky Warbler and Carolina Wren song can be quite challenging). Where there are flooded woods, Prothonotary Warbler can be abundant. Older pine woodlands usually host Pine and Yellow-throated Warblers and in more scraggly patches of pine, Prairie Warbler. Northern Parula is the most abundant warbler (pishing in most wooded areas will have one at your side) and Yellow-breasted Chat was the *second-most abundant* warbler, found in early successional habitat and young pine plantations. Louisiana Waterthrush, Black-and-white and Hooded Warblers, and American Redstart are at (or near) the southern limit of their breeding range. While on warblers, the hills of northern Alabama (elevation ~2000 feet) define the southern breeding range for many additional species of warbler. The list is long.

The Alabama BBA 2002 will continue until 2006 and may provide "atlas withdrawal" relief for BOS members when the NYSBBA concludes in 2004.



## 67<sup>th</sup> Buffalo Ornithological Society May Bird Count

May 18, 2003

### Weather Synopsis

(provided by National Weather Service, Buffalo, NY)

Sunrise: 05:49 EDT      Sunset: 20:36 EDT

Time (EDT)	Weather	Temp (F)	Dew Pt. (F)	Pressure (inches Hg)	Wind (mph)
12:00AM	mainly clear	55	48	30.24	E5
3:00 AM	cloudy	54	48	30.23	E6
6:00 AM	partly cloudy	54	49	30.25	E5
9:00 AM	sunny	59	50	30.29	VR3
12:00 PM	mostly sunny	67	53	30.26	NE10
3:00 PM	mostly sunny	71	47	30.22	SE10
6:00 PM	mostly sunny	72	48	30.19	NE16
9:00 PM	clear	63	44	30.22	E12

Daily Weather Summary:              Max Temp. 72 F              Min. Temp. 54 F              Precipitation 0.00

The weather synopsis was provided by Terry Yonker.

### Compilation

The following is a list of species seen on the count followed by the total number observed. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers appear in parentheses. Boldface names indicate species for which acceptable written verifications were received. F and L represent the first and last dates for the spring migration. \* represents the first record for the year.

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Section</u>			
<b>Loons-Ducks</b>			Gadwall	6	(10,13)
Common Loon	12		American Wigeon	2	(13)
Pied-billed Grebe	20		American Black Duck	2	(10,11)
Horned Grebe	9	(13,19)	Mallard	834	
Double-crested Cormorant	2066		Blue-winged Teal	24	
American Bittern	2	(10)	Northern Shoveler	4	(10)
Least Bittern	1	(10)	Northern Pintail	7	(1,10)
Great Blue Heron	500		Green-winged Teal	4	(2,10,20)
Great Egret	11		Redhead	10	(10)
Green Heron	46		Ring-necked Duck <b>L</b>	3	(5,13)
Black-crowned Night-Heron	43		Greater Scaup	34	
<b>Glossy Ibis</b>	1	(10)	Lesser Scaup	17	(9,13,20)
Turkey Vulture	482		unidentified Scaup	15	
Canada Goose	3575		White-winged Scoter	517	(1,4)
Mute Swan	10	(5,16)	Long-tailed Duck	512	(3,4)
Wood Duck	133		Bufflehead	21	
			Common Goldeneye	4	(9,11,20)



Hooded Merganser	19		Common Nighthawk	3	(1,10)
Common Merganser	31		Chimney Swift	211	
Red-breasted Merganser	1085		Ruby-throated Hummingbird	282	
Ruddy Duck	60	(10,13)	Belted Kingfisher	77	
<b>Raptors-Coots</b>			Red-headed Woodpecker	16	
Osprey	19		Red-bellied Woodpecker	132	
Bald Eagle	17		Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	94	
Northern Harrier	24		Downy Woodpecker	231	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	32		Hairy Woodpecker	84	
Cooper's Hawk	21		Northern Flicker	245	
Red-shouldered Hawk	13		Pileated Woodpecker	33	
Broad-winged Hawk	19		Eastern Wood Pewee	54	
Red-tailed Hawk	238		*Acadian Flycatcher F	6	(13,20,24)
Rough-legged Hawk	2	(1,4)	*Alder Flycatcher F	13	(5)
American Kestrel	53		Willow Flycatcher	26	
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>	6	(2,11)	Least Flycatcher	100	
Ring-necked Pheasant	28		unidentified empidonax	34	
Ruffed Grouse	54		Eastern Phoebe	167	
Wild Turkey	81		Great Crested Flycatcher	144	
Virginia Rail	4	(2,5,10)	Eastern Kingbird	230	
Sora	7		White-eyed Vireo	3	(10,11)
Common Moorhen	7	(10,11,26)	Yellow-throated Vireo	17	
American Coot	17		Blue-headed Vireo	31	
<b>Sandhill Crane</b>	5	(16)	Warbling Vireo	223	
<b>Plovers-Terns</b>			Philadelphia Vireo	11	
*Black-bellied Plover F	3	(4)	Red-eyed Vireo	249	
Semipalmated Plover	18	(7,13,22)	Blue Jay	1155	
Killdeer	322		American Crow	1679	
Greater Yellowlegs	7	(4,21)	<b>Common Raven</b>	5	(13,28)
Lesser Yellowlegs	27		Horned Lark	18	
Solitary Sandpiper	26		Purple Martin	348	
Spotted Sandpiper	89		Tree Swallow	1400	
Upland Sandpiper	1	(10)	No. Rough-winged Swallow	291	
*Ruddy Turnstone F	10	(7,8)	Bank Swallow	423	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	11	(5,8)	Cliff Swallow	272	
*Western Sandpiper F	1	(8)	Barn Swallow	1409	
Least Sandpiper	88		<b>Chickadees-Waxwings</b>		
Pectoral Sandpiper	3	(5)	Black-capped Chickadee	753	
Dunlin	69		Tufted Titmouse	130	
Wilson's Snipe	4		Red-breasted Nuthatch	29	
American Woodcock	20		White-breasted Nuthatch	164	
Bonaparte's Gull	148		Brown Creeper	10	
Ring-billed Gull	32273		Carolina Wren	24	
Herring Gull	3519		House Wren	307	
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>	1	(9)	Winter Wren	4	(15,18,22)
Great Black-backed Gull	248		Marsh Wren	24	
<b>Iceland Gull</b>	1	(4)	Golden-crowned Kinglet	9	
gull species	280		Ruby-crowned Kinglet L	24	
Caspian Tern	197		Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	38	
Common Tern	222		Eastern Bluebird	186	
Black Tern	29	(5,10,13)	Veery	52	
<b>Doves-Swallows</b>			*Gray-cheeked Thrush F	6	(1,3,4)
Rock Dove	1020		Swainson's Thrush	8	
Mourning Dove	1437		Hermit Thrush	17	
Black-billed Cuckoo	17	(13,20)	Wood Thrush	306	
*Yellow-billed Cuckoo F	5	(5,12,24)	American Robin	3648	
Eastern Screech-Owl	2	(10,13)	Gray Catbird	842	
Great Horned Owl	6		Northern Mockingbird	34	
Barred Owl	5	(12,20)	Brown Thrasher	38	
Long-eared Owl	1	(4)	European Starling	4702	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	(5)	American Pipit	220	(4,10,16)
			Cedar Waxwing	265	



## Warblers

Blue-winged Warbler	139	
Golden-winged Warbler	6	(4,5,13)
<b>*"Lawrence's Warbler"</b>	1	(18)
Tennessee Warbler	17	
Orange-crowned Warbler	3	(5,11,13)
Nashville Warbler	36	
Northern Parula	22	
Yellow Warbler	1977	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	275	
Magnolia Warbler	163	
Cape May Warbler	9	
Black-throated Blue Warbler	83	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	304	
Black-throated Green Warbler	125	
Blackburnian Warbler	50	
Pine Warbler	9	
Prairie Warbler	14	(28)
Palm Warbler	7	
Bay-breasted Warbler	34	
Blackpoll Warbler	12	
Cerulean Warbler	17	(7,11)
Black-and-white Warbler	14	
American Redstart	268	
<b>*Prothonotary Warbler</b>	1	(10)
Ovenbird	201	
Northern Waterthrush	17	
Louisiana Waterthrush	5	(13,20)
<b>*Connecticut Warbler</b>	1	(5)
Mourning Warbler	19	(12,17)
Common Yellowthroat	818	
Hooded Warbler	128	
Wilson's Warbler	11	
Canada Warbler	17	

## Tanagers-Sparrows

Scarlet Tanager	87	
Eastern Towhee	152	
Chipping Sparrow	746	
<b>*Clay-colored Sparrow</b>	3	(18)
Field Sparrow	205	
Vesper Sparrow	5	(7,15)
Savannah Sparrow	129	
Grasshopper Sparrow	9	(7,28)
<b>*Henslow's Sparrow F</b>	2	(12,13)
Song Sparrow	1219	
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	(2,5,7)
Swamp Sparrow	65	
White-throated Sparrow	53	
White-crowned Sparrow	133	
unidentified sparrow	2	
Dark-eyed Junco	230	
Northern Cardinal	859	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	557	
Indigo Bunting	188	
Bobolink	795	
Red-winged Blackbird	4872	
Eastern Meadowlark	133	
Rusty Blackbird	24	(11,12,28)
Common Grackle	2915	
Brown-headed Cowbird	763	
<b>Orchard Oriole</b>	3	(2,4)

Baltimore Oriole	906	
Purple Finch	129	
House Finch	395	
Pine Siskin	2	(3)
American Goldfinch	1988	
House Sparrow	1822	
unidentified birds	42	

**Total Species Observed: 212,**

**Total Individual Birds Observed: 96,680**

### Notable Count Highs:

The number of species (212) is tied for the largest ever observed on the May count since it started in 1935. The number of individuals (96,680) was the sixth largest total on the May count. Fourteen individual species were recorded at their highest total ever: Great Blue Heron (500), White-winged Scoter (517), Long-tailed Duck (512), Bald Eagle (17), Red-tailed Hawk (238), Peregrine Falcon (6), Caspian Tern (197), Red-bellied Woodpecker (132), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (941), Acadian Flycatcher (6), Northern Mockingbird (34), American Pipet (220), Clay-colored Sparrow (3), and Northern Cardinal (859). Several other species also were recorded at their second highest total since the count began.

### Notable Species:

Sandhill Crane, second record on May count. Iceland Gull, first record on May count. Lesser Black-backed Gull, first record on May count.

### Notable Count Lows:

In spite of the large overall numbers of individuals, a number of species were recorded in very low numbers: Veery (52) second lowest, lowest since 1937, Swainson's Thrush (8), second lowest ever, Eastern Meadowlark (133) lowest since 1941.

### Observers (Section compliers in boldface.)

**Section 1:** David Cooper, Barbara Henderson, **Lynne Landon**, Jim Wojewodzki, Peter Yoerg

**Section 2:** Brian Ahara, **John Black**, Kayo Roy, Katherine Stoltz

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Kellog, Wayne Kellog, Woodie Lange, Lash Family, Cathy MacDonald, Ken McClure, Marion McClure, Mary Ormsby, Lyle Palmiter, Thelma Palmiter, Bererly Perry, Sean Phelan, Ann Pipal, Bob Pipal, Ester Pitzrick, Michael Pitzrick, Vivian Pitzrick, Dan Rase, Peggy Rase, Dan Ramsey, Evelyn Ramsey, Ona Reynolds, Naney Rouse, Rieh Rygiel, Jim Smith, Maureen Soule, Terah Soule, Conner Stephens, Bruce Taggart, Wilma Taggart, Abbey Timbrook, Tim Timbrook, Linda Travers, Cindy Vanece, Gerry Vanece, Mary Lu Wells, Suzanne Wood

**Total number of observers: 279**

**Verification reports were submitted by:**

John E. Black, Michael J. DeSha, Eileen J. Hull, Brendan Kliek & Don Harris, Karen & James Landau, Susan & Thomas O'Donnell, Frances M. Rew, and Michael Zebehazy & Doug Happ

**Count Compilers: Robert L. DeLeon and Donna V. DeLeon**



BOS website  
<http://birds.rtpi.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

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## July – September Calendar

**June through August** BOS members are encouraged to participate in the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche (Email: [drosche@juno.com](mailto:drosche@juno.com) or 652-8409).

**July 27: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

**August 17: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you have questions or would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker or Lynne Landon at (716) 745-9129 or email: [TerryYonker@cs.com](mailto:TerryYonker@cs.com)

**August 31: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie** for shorebirds (Buff-breasted Sandpiper) and other early migrants. Leader: Mike Hamilton. Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there

**September 7: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach** for warblers and shorebirds. Leader: TBA. Meet at 7:30 AM in the Tifft N. P. parking lot. This is a half day trip.

**September 10: BOS Meeting. Members' Night.** Bring along your favorite stories/slides to share. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**September 21: Western Lake Ontario Plains.** Leaders Tom and Susan O'Donnell (716-284-5569 or [TMODonnell@adelphia.net](mailto:TMODonnell@adelphia.net)) Meet at 8:00 AM at Tops on Center Street in Lewiston.

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: June

by Joe Thill

The unseasonably cool weather that has characterized our spring on the Niagara Frontier this year continued into June. The average temperature for the month at Buffalo was 65.5 degrees (all temperatures in Fahrenheit), 2.3 degrees below normal for the period. This gives our region the distinction of a ninth consecutive month with below normal temperature readings; it was the first time such a string of cold months has been recorded at the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport since 1943. The coldest weather of the month at Buffalo was recorded during the first five days when daily temperatures hovered between four and ten degrees below normal. The low thermometer reading for the period, 43 degrees, recorded on June 2nd was ten degrees below normal. Precipitation in the form of rain at Buffalo this month totaled 1.8 inches, 2.0 inches below normal. Only twelve days of rainfall, most of it occurring during the first half of the month, were recorded at Buffalo although downpours in the Southern Tier counties were considerably more frequent. Temperatures became more summerlike after the thermometer briefly reached 87 degrees at Buffalo on June 26th and the region enjoyed more seasonal temperatures at month's end. (Meteorological data

provided by the local climate summary of the National Weather Service via the internet.)

The vagaries of weather notwithstanding, June is an exciting month to be afield as a glance at the month's noteworthy records will attest. Once again this month, many

of the sightings reported to our compiler of records were made in no small account due to local participation in the New York State Federation of Bird Clubs Atlas 2000 project to update the reference, *Atlas of Breeding Birds of New York State*. Following are some of these sightings of unusual interest.

For the second consecutive season, verified reports of Sedge Wren sightings in June raised hopes that this rare passage migrant and formerly local breeding species is once again increasing in numbers in our study area (see Prothonotary vol. 68:7, 76, June 2002). On June 6th, Bill Watson and Kurt Fox identified one wren of this species in flight carrying nesting material at the edge of a large field of switchgrass north of the Mallard Overlook at the Ringneck Marsh on the Iroquois NWR in Orleans county. The bird was seen later on that date by Peter Yoerg. On June 20th another wren of this species, presumably the same bird, was seen at this location by Mike Morgante. Meanwhile June 6th continued to be an eventful day for Watson and his party. Some five hours after discovering the Sedge Wren at the refuge, the group continued birding in the Tonawanda WMA east of Meadville Road and its juncture with NY Route 77 in Genesee County. There they located a female Blue-winged Warbler and her assumed mate, an adult male Lawrence's Warbler, the hybrid issue of a Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warbler mating. The birds were observed carrying caterpillar larvae into a heavily wooded area located about 1/3 mile south of Meadville Road – the observers could not locate a nest.

Elsewhere during this eventful month, while atlas-ing on Carpenter Road in the Town of Wales in Erie County on June 7th, Mike Morgante heard a bird singing from the confines of a posted field which he

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immediately recognized as "the distinct and unmistakable steady rising song of repeated buzzes" from a Prairie Warbler. He was unable to see the songster but moved a short distance down the road where he saw and studied a second singing bird confirming his original deduction. Morgante notes "this is perhaps the furthest north evidence of breeding (probable) in WNY. Atlas 2000 project has proven that this species can now be expected in southern Erie county."

Other species of unusual interest reported in June by atlasers include a much sought after but rarely seen spring and fall vagrant in our study area, a Western Kingbird. The bird was seen on June 28th by Lake Erie Bird Club and BOS mem-

bers Terry Mosher and Dick Miga while birding on "an unnamed and unimproved road" connecting Brocton Reservoir to Ellicott Road in the Town of Portland in Chautauqua County. Mosher saw the bird flying slowly over an uncut hayfield and it was quite tame, coming within twenty feet of the observer's vehicle. Diagnostic field marks including light ash-gray crown and mantle, raised crown feather and a "bright rich lemon yellow" underparts were clearly visible. It is only the 7th verified occurrence of this flycatcher in our study area since 1956.

Saw-whet Owl sightings and vocalizations from Western New York have become more numerous. A review of the sightings of this owl accepted for publication in the Noteworthy Records section of this journal between April 2002 and April 2003 totals 47 individuals from eight locations in Western New York and Southern Ontario (this includes 27 migrants banded by Dave Junkin in November 2002). Many

Can you identify this hummingbird species that was photographed in the copper State?



Photo Courtesy of Willie D'Anna

records resulted from the employment of taped calls of this species. On June 2nd, Brendan Klick and Don Harris employed such a tape to determine the presence of these owls in a dense woodland of mixed deciduous and conifer trees on the 'New Hudson Road' adjacent to Hanging Bog WMA in the Town of New Hudson in Allegany county. Playback of these recordings between 4 and 4:15 AM, elicited responses from two owls from locations about two miles apart. Klick and Harris have enjoyed remarkable success in attracting owls by use of taped calls. In the present instance, one owl was located in a dense woods of mixed deciduous and coniferous trees and the second in a dense stand of conifers. Lack of adequate light prevented visual contact with their quarry but vocal response to the tape identified the birds as Saw-whet Owls that both observers have heard "on about a dozen previous occasions".

On June 20th, in the course of an afternoon of atlas work in the Town of Eden, Bob and Pat Andrle stopped by a pond at the junction of Jennings Road and Route 60 in that township. They were rewarded by the discovery of a Cattle Egret preening and walking along the grassy edge of the pond as well as on a dock nearby. The observers are well acquainted with this egret having previously seen it in the tropics, the southern United States, and Mexico as well as a rare vagrant in Western New York and Southern Ontario. The recently published, *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds*, lists only five records in our study area; its presence in June is described as very rare and exceptional.

The author wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Bob Andrle, Gerry Rising, Dave Suggs, and Bill Watson in the preparation of this article.



## Ripley Hawk Watch: Spring 2003

By Gil Randell

This Spring's weather for the Ripley Hawk Watch was consistent with the weather reported in a previous *Prothonotary* (vol 69, 7) by Jim Landau for the Hamburg Hawk Watch: in many ways a typically unpredictable Western New York Spring. May was disappointing, with rain, snow and fog restricting the Ripley Hawk Watch to 15 days for the month. The difficult weather in May was partly responsible for our fairly low Broad-winged Hawk numbers.

Members of the Ripley Hawk Watch have been vigorously engaged in monitoring and critiquing a wind turbine project proposed for the area of the hawk watch. The project would site 34 turbines 400 feet tall on a line five-and-one-half miles long in the towns of Ripley and Westfield along the edge of the escarpment overlooking Lake Erie. Flights of migrating raptors this Spring flowed directly through the areas proposed for the turbines, frequently at altitudes that would put them at severe risk for collision with the turbine blades, which move at speeds of over 200 miles per hour at their tips. We are very grateful for the helpful support many BOS members have given us in our concerns and efforts.

One ancillary benefit to our efforts has been the initiation of a Spring, night and day, migrating bird study coordinated by environmental consultants from Buffalo, who have subcontracted with another firm for the radar component of the study. We currently are urging the study to be expanded into this Fall, we think with some success, and replicated next Spring, in part to compensate for inconsistencies in weather and flights from one year to the next. We hope to see a draft of the work done on this Spring's migration soon.

This Spring saw a record number of Bald Eagles (86) and Golden Eagles (20) documented at the Ripley Hawk Watch. Field workers for the bird study associated with the turbine project gave us expanded coverage at the Hawk Watch and helped account for the more than 100 eagles sighted.

On March 17<sup>th</sup> observers recorded the lone Black Vulture for the year. Two Mississippi Kites were recorded, one on May 20<sup>th</sup> and one on May 30<sup>th</sup>. A one-day record for Sharp-shinned Hawks at the Ripley Hawk Watch occurred on April 17<sup>th</sup>, when 417 individuals were recorded. The previous high had been 396 Sharp-shinned Hawks sighted on April 20, 1992. Numbers of Peregrine Falcons and Merlins were down somewhat this Spring, but perhaps not significantly. Their low numbers may also be a function of the relatively few watch days in May.

The Ripley Hawk Watch also recorded 33 Sandhill Cranes, a year's record for the watch: possibly one of the best spots in New York State to observe Sandhill Cranes. In addition to the more than 100 migrating eagles, Bald Eagles were occasionally seen at the Ripley Hawk Watch that probably were not migrants. These birds typically would appear from the east and fly over the hawk watch going in a westerly or southerly direction and were not included in the count of 86 Bald Eagles. Strong evidence exists that a pair of Bald Eagles nested and successfully fledged at least one bird this Spring and Summer; members of the Ripley Hawk Watch currently are attempting to document the nest location. Historically eagles have nested near the Ripley Hawk Watch, but successful nestings have not been documented for decades.

The core group of Ripley Hawk Watch observers, each with 10 or more hours on the site, included coordinator Len DeFrancisco, Mel and Sally Freeborough, Gil and Jann Randell, Bob Sundell, Mike Ceci, Bill Dietz, Dave Feliciano, and Martha Neel. Nancy Luenman, Tom Simmons and Charlie Hanks also contributed time at the hawk watch, as did a number of others. The table below outlines the 2003 season:

2003 SEASON	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL
Days/month	19	25	15	3	62
Black Vulture	1	0	0	0	1
Turkey Vulture	3,729	3,768	552	19	8,068
Osprey	1	117	69	4	191
Mississippi Kite	0	0	2	0	2
Bald Eagle	17	35	32	2	86
Northern Harrier	33	153	16	0	202
Sharp-shinned Hawk	169	1,270	293	3	1,735
Cooper's Hawk	30	68	15	0	113
Northern Goshawk	1	4	1	0	6
Red-shouldered Hawk	169	11	0	0	180
Broad-winged Hawk	0	5,718	907	100	6,725
Red-tailed Hawk	656	604	203	20	1,483
Rough-legged Hawk	7	6	0	0	13
Golden Eagle	2	10	8	0	20
American Kestrel	55	292	11	1	359
Merlin	6	7	2	0	15
Peregrine Falcon	4	6	5	0	15
Unidentified Raptor	14	37	29		84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,894</b>	<b>12,106</b>	<b>2,145</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>19,298</b>

A more detailed report is being prepared for submission within the next few weeks to the Hawk Migration Association of North America and will be available for viewing at HMANA's [www.hawkcount.org](http://www.hawkcount.org). Comments or questions about this report or the Ripley Hawk Watch should be directed to Len DeFrancisco (716/665-4999) or Gil Randell (716/753-2333 or email [janngil@netsync.net](mailto:janngil@netsync.net)).



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	7	1	Alfred	Brooks
D.-crested Cormorant	3	1050	Rock Point PP	Watson
"	23	158 (51 n, 18 yg)	Motor I.	Watson
American Bittern	2	1	Kiantone	Klick, Harris
"	6; 14	3; 2	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
"	16; 29	1; 2	Tonawanda WMA	Watson, Yoerg
Least Bittern	2	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
"	17	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	29	6	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Great Egret	1 - 27	1 - 2	Tonawanda	Hess
"	8	1	Buffalo	Morgante
"	16	9 ad, 28 yg	Motor I.	Watson et al
"	23	7 ad, 7 yg	Motor I.	Watson
"	29	1; 1	Newstead; Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
* <u>Cattle Egret</u>	20	1	Eden	Andrle
Black-cr. Night-Heron	23	5	Motor I.	Watson
Red-br. Merganser	3	74	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	Watson
Osprey	2-29	11 reports	throughout WNY	Several observers
Bald Eagle	6; 10	1; 1 (ads.)	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	6	1 ad, 2 yg	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	8	1 imm	Yates	D'Anna
"	14	1	Tifft NP	Andrle
"	16	2 ad, 1 imm	Tonawanda WMA	Watson; Yoerg
"	21; 23	1; 1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
"	22	1 ad	Machias	Yoerg, Henderson
"	29	1 imm	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-shouldered Hawk	7; 10; 20	1; 1; 1 yg	Alfred; Ward; Alfred	Brooks
Broad-winged Hawk	5; 28	1; 1	Chautauqua Co.	Berry
"	8	30	Somerset	D'Anna
"	20	1	Alfred	Brooks
<u>Peregrine Falcon</u>	2	1	Buffalo	Klick
"	30	2 ad, 3 yg	Buffalo	Burch
Sora	6; 15	1; 4	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg
"	14	1	Lockport	Watson
"	14	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
Black-bellied Plover	3L	1	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	Watson
Semipalmated Plover	6	2	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
Solitary Sandpiper	1L	1	Eden	Andrle
Upland Sandpiper	2	1	Shelby	Klick, Harris
"	5	3	Tillman WMA	Yoerg



<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	9	1	Ashford	Klick, Harris
"	11	2	Tillman WMA	Klick
Ruddy Turnstone	3L	3; 28	Morgan's Pt.; Rock Point PP	Watson
Semipalm. Sandpiper	1; 7L	15; 2	Chautauqua Co.	Berry
Least Sandpiper	6L	4	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
"	30F	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna
White-r. Sandpiper	3L	4	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	Watson
Dunlin	1	4	Chautauqua Co.	Berry
Common Snipe	2	1	Hanging Bog WMA	Klick, Harris
"	6	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Klick
Caspian Tern	2	1	Buffalo	Klick, Harris
"	3	1; 11	Morgan's Pt.; Rock Point PP	Watson
Black Tern	6	8	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Yoerg
"	16	2	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Watson
"	18	2	Iroquois NWR	Hess
"	20	2	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	6-29	13 reports	throughout WNY	Several observers
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	2	2	New Hudson	Klick, Harris
Common Nighthawk	1; 3	1; 2	Buffalo; UB South Cam- pus	Yoerg
"	6	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Klick et al
* Whip-poor-will	6	6	Wainfleet, Ont.	Klick et al
"	7	6	Port Colborne, Ont.	Burch (BOS)
Red-headed Wdpkr.	2	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	22	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	11	1	Pembroke	Klick
* Olive-s. Flycatcher	8	1	Chautauqua Co.	Berry
* Yellow-b. Flycatcher	7L	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
Acadian Flycatcher	2	1	Alma	Klick, Harris
* <u>Western Kingbird</u>	28	1	Portland	Mosher
Eastern Kingbird	1 - 29	13 records	Cattaraugus Co.	Berry
"	12; 16	1; 1	Cambria; Niagara Twp.	Roberson
"	19 - 28	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
White-eyed Vireo	<u>6</u>	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris, Yoerg
"	<u>9</u>	1	Westfield	Klick, Harris
Yellow-thr. Vireo	6-25	8 reports	throughout WNY	Several observers
Common Raven	12 - 26	5 records	Allegany Co.	Brooks
"	12 - 28	5 records	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Horned Lark	17; 21; 29	2; 4; 2	Andover	Brooks
Cliff Swallow	6	15	Andover	Brooks
"	8	3	Fort Erie	Morgante
"	23	40 ad. 52 n, 18 yg	N. Tonawanda	Watson
"	24	2	Times Beach	Andrle
Red-br. Nuthatch	7	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
Carolina Wren	16 - 21	1	Eggertsville	Morgante
Winter Wren	2	1	Bolivar	Klick, Harris
"	10 - 29	6 records	Allegany Co.	Brooks
"	15	1	South Wales	Morgante
<u>Sedge Wren</u>	6	2	Iroquois NWR	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	20	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Gray-cheeked Thrush	5L	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Swainson's Thrush	2	1	Alma	Klick, Harris
"	5; 10L	3; 1	Tonawanda	Hess
Northern Mockingbird	7	1	Chautauqua Co.	Berry
"	8	1	Hartland	Watson
"	8	1	E. Bethany	Beattie
"	13	1	Wheatfield	Roberson
Golden-wing. Warbler	2	1; 1	Iroquois NWR; Oakfield	Klick, Harris
"	8; 17	1; 2	Hartland	Watson
"	15	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Yoerg
Brewster's Warbler	6	2	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg
"	7; 22	1; 1	Hartland	Potter, D'Anna
"	8	1	Batavia	Klick
"	15	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Yoerg
"	20	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
<u>Lawrence's Warbler</u>	6	1	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Nashville Warbler	2	3	Allegany Co.	Klick, Harris
"	22	2	Hartland	Potter, D'Anna
Northern Parula	2L	1	Genesee	Klick, Harris
Chestnut-s. Warbler	22	1	Hartland	Potter, D'Anna
Prairie Warbler	2	1	New Hudson	Klick, Harris
"	6 - 26	9 records	Allegany Co.	Brooks
"	7; 15	2; 1	<u>Wales</u>	Morgante
"	22	6	Ashford	Yoerg, Henderson
Blackpoll Warbler	3L	1; 5	Morgan's Pt.; Rock Point PP	Watson
"	5; 7	1; 1	Cattaraugus Co.	Berry
Cerulean Warbler	8; 17	4; 1	Yates; Hartland	Watson
Black-and-white Warb.	2	1	Genesee	Klick, Harris
"	22	1	Almond	Brooks
Prothonotary Warbler	6	1	Tonawanda WMA	Watson, Fox, Yoerg
"	20	2	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	29	3	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Waterthrush	1	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
"	2	1	Tonawanda WMA	Klick, Harris
"	6	1	Tonawanda WMA	Watson, Fox, Yoerg
La. Waterthrush	2	1	Genesee	Klick, Harris
"	15	1	Colden	Morgante
"	30	1	Allegany SP	Hess
Wilson's Warbler	3L	1	Rock Point PP	Watson
Canada Warbler	1 - 25	6 records	Allegany Co.	Brooks
"	3	1	Rock Point PP	Watson
"	5	1	Chautauqua Co.	Berry
"	28	1	Stockton	Mosher
* <u>Clay-col. Sparrow</u>	2	1	Andover	Klick, Harris
"	9	2	Ashford	Klick, Harris
Vesper Sparrow	2 - 28	9 records	throughout WNY	Several observers
Grasshopper Sparrow	2	1	Andover	Klick, Harris
"	5	2	Tillman WMA	Yoerg
"	7 - 29	5 records	Andover	Brooks
"	8; 17; 24	1; 3; 1	Hartland	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
“	15	2	Pomfret	Mosher
“	29	2	E. Bethany	Beattie
Henslow's Sparrow	2	5	Lancaster	Klick, Harris
“	26	3	Grove	Brooks
White-thr. Sparrow	1 - 26	9 records	Allegany Co.	Brooks
“	2	1	W. Almond	Klick, Harris
Orchard Oriole	14	1	Hartland	D'Anna, Potter
“	15	1	<u>Ripley</u>	D'Anna
Red Crossbill	2	1	W. Almond	Klick, Harris

Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:	258
Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:	6
Total for the year 2003:	264

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## The Whip-poor-wills Perform Again — June 6, 2003 *by Bill Burch*

This year 26 persons, including seven first-timers, were attracted to a quiet gravel road at nightfall in nearby Ontario. We were there to await the start of the chorus of haunting calls of the Whip-poor-wills.

The outing began with a 7:00 p.m. dinner at the Lotus Gardens in Port Colborne, Ontario. Present were 18 members and guests. Absent from the dinner this year were the Canadians from the Bert Miller Nature Club, but eight of them did join us later. After dinner we drove 3.6 miles west to Wilson Road, then a mile north (designated by a side road here) to the favored spot. In the gathering dusk we listened to thrushes, cat-birds and yellowthroats and remarked that, for the third year, the "thunks" of the Green Frogs were missing.

At 9:15 we saw one Whip-poor-will fly across the road and into the great Wainfleet Bog to the east. Shortly thereafter, the calling began, reaching a peak of intensity around 9:40 and for 10 minutes thereafter. At 10:05 we departed, noting that the fireflies still were flashing and that Whip-poor-wills continued to call from far back in the bog.

And thus ended our 13th annual encounter with this mysterious bird with the unforgettable call.

## July 27, 2003 Field Trip to Rock Point Provincial Park for Shorebirds *by Mike Hamilton*

Nine of us drove directly to the Park hoping to beat campers and dogs to the shore area. Upon arrival we were greeted with strong southwest winds and Lake Erie water levels raised to the point where shorebird habitat was greatly reduced. However, the conditions brought the birds that were there closer to us and we had good views of: Semipalmated Plovers, Killdeers, Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpipers, Sanderlings (juveniles), Semipalmated, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers, and breeding plumage Short-billed Dowitchers. We added no other shorebird species at Morgan's, Rathfon, or Sugarloaf Points or at Rosehill Road and Jaeger Rocks on the way home, but we did watch an adult male White-winged Scoter, which Jim Pawlicki spotted, treading water in the fast moving waters of the feeder canal just west of the Welland Canal in Port Colborne. I suspect that it was in eclipse plumage as there were people fairly close to it and it did not fly. This was a very unusual sighting as our date guide indicates August 29 – June 10 as the period of its normal presence.



BOS website  
<http://birds.rtpi.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

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## August – October Calendar

**June through August:** NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche at [drosche@juno.com](mailto:drosche@juno.com) or 652-8409).

**August 31: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie.** Leader: Mike Hamilton. Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there

**September 7: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach.** Leader: Ed Ratajczak. Meet at 7:30 AM in the Tifft N. P. parking lot. This is a half day trip.

**September 10: BOS Meeting. Members' Night.** Bring along your favorite stories/slides to share. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

**September 21: Western Lake Ontario Plain.** Leaders Tom and Susan O'Donnell (716-284-5569 or [TMODonnell@adelphia.net](mailto:TMODonnell@adelphia.net)) Meet at 8:00 AM at Tops on Center Street in Lewiston.

**October 12: BOS Annual October Count.** Mike Hamilton 881-6709.

**October 18: Saturday. Batavia WWTP/Iroquois NWR.** Leader: Mike Morgante 683-4819. Meet 8:30 AM at the WWTP, end of Industrial Blvd., which is off of Pearl Rd. (Rt. 33) in Batavia 1 1/2 miles west of Rt. 98.

**October 25: Saturday. Lake Ontario Plain.** Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or [dannapotter@wzrd.com](mailto:dannapotter@wzrd.com)). Meet at 8 AM at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104.

**October 31 through November 2, 2003:** 56th Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs to be held at the world famous Athenaeum Hotel on the grounds of the Chatauqua Institute. The speaker on Saturday evening will be John Rappole, currently the Research Coordinator at the Conservation and Research Center of the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park.

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length and participants should plan accordingly. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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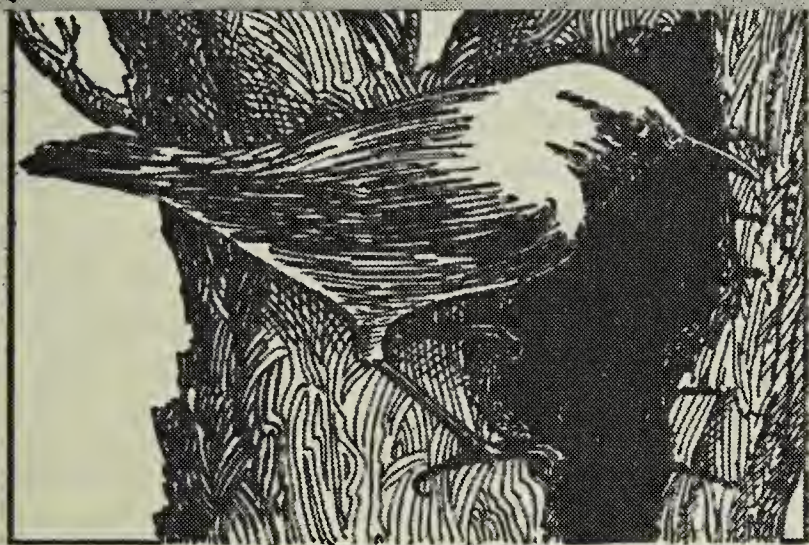
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# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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### THE MONTH: July

*by Michael Zebehazy*

July had its share of fine summer weather in the Buffalo area, but this premiere summer month fell a bit short in 2003. Temperatures and rainfall were within the normal range, but sunshine was quite limited.

The month began with a warm week, but the bulk of the remainder of the month was cool as an upper level low pressure area settled across the Great Lakes and Northeast. Only ten days reached the 80s (all temperatures in Fahrenheit), about half the usual for July. In fact, the total of 15 days for the year is the least ever recorded through July in airport records (60 years). Normally we have about 32 such days by the end of July. The average temperature of 69.6 degrees was about a degree cooler than normal. This was the tenth consecutive cooler than normal month at Buffalo.

Rainfall was unusually frequent, but the official 3.69 inches was just a fraction of an inch above normal. Rainfall varied widely across the area with Buffalo and the north sections receiving less while much greater amounts were recorded to the south, especially across the southern tier during the third week where flash flooding occurred.

Total sunshine was just 53 percent where the norm is 67 percent making this month the cloudiest since the infamous summer of 1992.

The most inclement period was the 21-24<sup>th</sup> when heavy showers and storms plagued the southern tier and occasional

showers affected the Buffalo area as well. Locally heavy downpours affected the southtowns on the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, the northtowns during the afternoon of the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the Clarence area late on the 24<sup>th</sup> with local flooding. The month ended with a pleasant four day stretch.

July was a somewhat slow month with a relatively low 52 species of note reported. The following information is taken from the various reports received as well as the Dial-a-Bird weekly summaries:

The Batavia WWTP continues to be productive at this time of year. This location has a unique set of waterfowl not found elsewhere in the region during the summer season including Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck and Common Moorhen. This is also a great spot for migrant shorebirds which have started to accumulate there this month.

Leonard De Francisco, the Ripley Hawk Watch coordinator reports the following: He and others, particularly Mike June, who lives on Mount Baldy Road, have been monitoring a Bald Eagle nest in, curiously, the Mount Baldy area of Westfield, NY. The nest is the first of its kind in Chautauqua County since the 1960's. The observers had kept quiet about this out of concern for the birds' safety and success. However, because the nest is located very close to a proposed wind turbine farm the group has gone public. The danger posed by the 34 wind turbines to the eagles and other New York State listed birds should be obvious and of concern. The D.E.C. and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have been alerted. (see below)

Dr. Andrie continues to report what is apparently the same largely white Red-tailed Hawk in Eden that

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2004-2005	Mike Hamilton Tom LeBlanc Mike Morgante

has shown up over the last several years.

Peter Yoerg once again has spotted Merlins on the UB campus. The first sighting on July 23<sup>rd</sup> was of an immature bird found roosting on the Main Street campus in the large cottonwood at Hayes Hall, an area Yoerg has unofficially designated Merlinville. Could this be one of the Merlins that winters on the campus? Excited about his discovery, Yoerg monitored the area more closely and discovered at least 3 individuals and possibly 4 over the next day or two. The falcons are in basic or female plumage. Could they be part of a locally bred family? No male Merlin has ever been found in the 10 years that the species has wintered on the campus. The only other July record

for the BOS area this writer could locate was last year's report of a single Merlin at Rock Point on the 7<sup>th</sup>. D'Anna's early Solitary Sandpiper was discovered near the Niagara Falls Airport at a construction waste site where a pool of water had collected near a grassy field.

The Caspian Tern in Hamburg was noteworthy for its unusual location at a village pond where it was feeding. Finally, Yoerg and Henderson's adult and immature Northern Parulas were found in Allegany SP a short distance up Wolf Run Rd.

Further gleanings from Dial-a-Bird: Breeding Bird Atlas studies in the Niagara County Towns of Hartland and Royalton were highlighted by the confirmation of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers breeding near Middleport; in the Niagara Frontier, sapsuckers usually breed at higher elevations, this is the first Niagara County nesting record. A male Golden-winged Warbler was discovered on July 15 in Nature View Park in

the Town of Amherst. This uncommon and decreasing warbler species was found by following an obscure dirt road on the north side of North French Rd. between Sweethome Rd. and Campbell Blvd. The road is marked by a sign for an archery range. At the end of the road is a parking area where one will find a network of trails. An impressive 80+ breeding species have been found in the park.

Thanks for help in preparing this report go to David Suggs, who prepares the weekly Dial-a-Bird reports and Gerry Rising for his editing. Also, thanks to the writers of the various reports that include more detailed information regarding unusual or interesting locations and species, as well as unusual species behavior.

## New York State Big Day

*by Brendan Klick*

Last year Dave Tetlow, Schoellkopf, Kurt Fox, and Jessie Barrie set a new record for big day birding in New York as they identified 202 species in one 24 hour period but due to the a technicality in the American Birding Association's Big Day record one species had to be dropped. Therefore, the current state record stood at 201. Don Harris and I have been doing big days in the B.O.S. study area for some years and wondered what the B.O.S. area alone could produce. Could it produce 200 species? Could it set the state record? Don and I figured the 180s should be easy, 190s possible, and over 200—well we figured that would be very difficult.

In order to plan our big day Don and I started scouting early in May. Our first project was to scout for Upland Sandpipers which are a very tough bird in Western New York. We found three locations for this bird hopefully one would pay off. Other scouting projects included Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Carolina Wren, Hermit Thrush, Golden-winged Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Vesper Sparrow, and Orchard Oriole among others. We knew because of scouting we were going to have a big day certainly in the 180s but anything more would depend on migration.

For our big day, Don suggested a route that would spend dawn on the Niagara River, then go along the lake plain looking for migrants, down route 98 to Batavia Waste Water, into Wyoming County for breeders, and then back to Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge to close out the day. This was an interesting route because it did not include a dawn chorus stop. Most western New York big days teams have included a



location of high breeding bird density to hit at dawn. I liked this route and Don convinced me that a dawn chorus spot was not essential; the important thing was that we hit as many areas as possible. We settled on May 18 as a tentative date. This date we hoped would be early enough to catch peak warbler migration and late enough to have most breeder species back on territory. As it got closer to the 18<sup>th</sup> it looked like the weather was going to be great. The 18<sup>th</sup> was going to be the day.

We started off our day at 0210 getting Henslow's Sparrow in Lancaster. At Tillman we added Sora, Virginia Rail, Screech and Great Horned Owls. Figuring we had a lot of time we took a walk to the back of Tillman. Upland Sandpiper responded to our whistle. Grasshopper Sparrow sang as well. This was huge pick up and probably saved us at least an hour later in the day. At our next stop, the Statler Building in downtown, the Peregrine Falcon was sitting at the edge of the nest box.

Not quite dawn, it was off to Beaver Island where we added Great Egret, Brown Creeper, and Carolina Wren among others. We took the long way around Grand Island to pick up staked out Cliff Swallow in North Tonawanda. We were at Goat Island by 0600. There we added several warblers including Cape May, Parula, Blackpoll, and Wilson's Warbler. Despite missing it on numerous scouting trips, we netted a Lesser Black-backed Gull. In the gorge we added Common Merganser and Common Tern but missed Bonaparte's Gull. Not much at Schoellkopf Geological Museum—just one White-throated Sparrow singing. Where was the Bufflehead that had been there just a few days earlier? A quick stop in Lewiston produced Northern Mockingbird.

On Lake Ontario from Dietz Road we had hundreds of White-winged Scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, a Common Loon, and a Greater Scaup—all of which can be tough on big days. We also added our only Palm Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Red-headed Woodpecker of the day. Two Pine Siskins flew overhead—a bird I did not expect due to the lack of winter finches in our area this winter. Krull Park in Olcott had Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Pine Warbler. At Barker we added Orchard Oriole. A late, unexpected Iceland Gull flew by. In Yates, we had an unexpected Rough-legged Hawk and a flock of over 150 American Pipits. At Yates-Carlton Townline road we picked up a Lincoln Sparrow and Philadelphia Vireo. A CONNECTICUT WARBLER was singing loudly. At Lakeside Beach we added Orange-crowned Warbler and our only Brown Thrasher of the day. We

were happy to get done on the Lake Plains by 1200 missing only Gray-cheeked Thrush and Mourning Warbler as possible migrants. We were off to a great start.

At Batavia we added Horned Grebe, American Wigeon, Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, and Dunlin. On to Wyoming County. We added a staked out Vesper Sparrow in Wethersfield. At Telegraph and Lyonsburg Road we added a staked out Prairie Warbler. While waiting for the warbler to sing we also heard some bonus birds: Broad-winged Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Winter Wren, and a distant Common Raven. The Winter Wren in particular was a great pick up because we had failed to find one during scouting. We drove to Attica where we netted Sapsucker, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Acadian Flycatcher on Cascade Road. We made a quick trip to Guinlock's Pond on Sage Road where we managed to pick up Purple Finch and Mourning Warbler.

We headed to Iroquois having missed Hermit Thrush and Red-shouldered Hawk. Luckily, we heard a Hermit Thrush on Sour Springs Road where we had had one last year. Pileated and Hairy Woodpecker were also vocalizing. We added a staked out Golden-winged Warbler and got Black-billed Cuckoo in the process. On Podunk Road we added Pectoral Sandpiper and Semipalmated Sandpiper. This made 11 species of shorebirds for the day; last year on our big day we had 18 species. Where was all the shorebird habitat this year? On Fletcher Chapel Road we spotted a Turkey which is nemesis bird for us on big days.

At Cayuga Pool we added Bald Eagle, Pintail, Red-head, Coot, and Pied-billed Grebe. On Owens-Bartel Road we added Northern Waterthrush and Cerulean Warbler. Driving down the road listening for Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Green Heron which had eluded us all day, we heard a WHITE-EYED VIREO. No cuckoo or Green Heron however. Next we biked down the feeder Canal Road to get the staked out Prothonotary for warbler species number 32(!) and nabbed Alder Flycatcher in the process. While putting the bikes in the van we spotted something flying high overhead with a long outstretched neck—GLOSSY IBIS! We were getting some great unexpected birds.

We headed to Knowlesville Road where picked up Yellow-billed Cuckoo. After spending about a half-hour looking we heard a Green Heron.

It was now 20:00. We rushed over to Judge Road hoping to pick up Red-shouldered Hawk. One called—nice. Rushing back to Cayuga Don spotted Green-winged Teal and Black Duck in the twilight. On Meadville Road we heard both Least and American Bitterns. A Common Nighthawk called. We were at



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
D.-crested Cormorant	8	220; 151	Rock Point PP; Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	18	1090	Buffalo Harbor	Burch
Least Bittern	4	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Great Egret	7; 18	29; 27	Motor I.	Watson
"	10 - 31	2 max	Tonawanda	Hess
"	31	38	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Mute Swan	8	7	Ft. Erie	Watson
American Black Duck	17	1 ad, 5 imm	Hartland	Watson
Northern Shoveler	20	1 m	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Canvasback	<u>21</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	20	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
White-winged Scoter	<u>27</u>	1	Port Colborne, Ont.	Klick et al
Common Merganser	1	1 ad, 7 imm	Allegany SP	Hess
"	8	5	Niagara Falls	Watson
Ruddy Duck	20	179	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Osprey	1 - 3	3 nests w/yg	Allegany SP	Hess
"	20	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	20	1 ad, 3 imm	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	20	2	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	3 nestlings	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Bald Eagle	2 - 30	2 ad, 1 nstlng	Westfield	DeFrancisco, June
"	20	1 ad, 3 imm	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Red-shouldered Hawk	19	1	Busti	Berry
Broad-winged Hawk	2; 9; 10	1; 1; 1	Andover; Alfred; Andover	Brooks
"	13; 19; 20	1; 1; 1	French Cr.; Busti; Busti	Berry
"	20	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Merlin	<u>23</u> ; <u>24</u> ; <u>29</u>	2; 3; 1	UB South Campus	Yoerg, Henderson
Peregrine Falcon	<u>11</u>	2 ad, 2 imm	Buffalo	Burch
Semipalmated Plover	27F	8	L. Erie north shore	Yoerg, Henderson
Greater Yellowlegs	11F	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna
"	27	6	L. Erie north shore	Yoerg, Henderson
Lesser Yellowlegs	2F	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna
"	8	38	Rock Point PP	Watson
"	20	5	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	27	20	W. Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Solitary Sandpiper	<u>2F</u>	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna
"	17; 31	1; 1	Hartland; Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Upland Sandpiper	8	1	Ft. Erie	Watson
Whimbrel	27F	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Ruddy Turnstone	27F	1	Rock Point PP	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Sanderling	27F	30	Rock Point PP	Yoerg, Henderson
Semipalm. Sandpiper	27F	20	Rock Point PP	Yoerg, Henderson
<u>Western Sandpiper</u>	27F	1	Rock Point PP	Yoerg, Henderson
Least Sandpiper	1; 11	4; 27	Wheatfield	D'Anna
"	8; 20	43; 15	Rock Pt. PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	27	10	Rock Point PP	Yoerg, Henderson
Pectoral Sandpiper	27F	4	L. Erie north shore	Yoerg, Henderson
* Short-b. Dowitcher	8F	12	Rock Point PP	Watson
Wilson's Snipe	13	2	Sherman	Berry
Caspian Tern	2	1	Hamburg Village	Andrle
Black Tern	4	9	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	20	7; 1	Iroquois NWR; Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Common Nighthawk	21	2	Buffalo	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-headed Wdpkr.	8	1	Ft. Erie	Watson
Acadian Flycatcher	1	1	Allegany SP	Hess
"	13	1	French Creek	Berry
"	20	5	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Raven	2	1	Allegany SP	Hess
"	3 - 19	5 records	Alfred, Andover	Brooks
"	20	2	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Bank Swallow	10	40 nests	Ridgeway	Watson
"	13	2	Sherman	Berry
Cliff Swallow	2	15 max	Andover	Brooks
"	5; 13	2; 2	Sherman; Bemus Pt.	Berry
Red-br. Nuthatch	1	1	Allegany SP	Hess
"	3 - 27	4 records	Alfred, Ward	Brooks
"	4; 13	1; 3	Sherman; French Creek	Berry
Carolina Wren	8	1	Rock Point PP	Watson
Winter Wren	6	1	Ward	Brooks
Swainson's Thrush	2	1	Allegany SP	Hess
"	20	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Mockingbird	1	1	Newfane	Watson
"	10 - 31	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	20; 25	1; 1	Wilson	Roberson
Brewster's Warbler	14	1	Cambria	Roberson
"	28	1	Hartland	Watson
Nashville Warbler	6	1	Machias	D'Anna, Potter
Northern Parula	<u>20</u>	1 ad, 1 imm	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Prairie Warbler	<u>1 - 30</u>	7 records	Andover; Alfred	Brooks
Eastern Towhee	4; 13; 19	2; 1; 1	Chautauqua Co.	Berry
Vesper Sparrow	1; 2; 20	1; 2; 1	Andover	Brooks
"	18	1	Ridgeway	Watson
Grasshopper Sparrow	3 - 27	7 records	Andover	Brooks
White-thr. Sparrow	3; 13	4; 1	Alfred	Brooks

Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:	264
Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:	1
Total for the year 2003:	265

Statisticians' Note: If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150. email: BChi314159@aol.com.



198 and needed two more to get to 200. We drove down Sour Springs Road where we whistled in a Saw-whet Owl. Barred Owl called on Albion Road.

It was 2130. Only two and a half hours left to go for the state record. We needed two more species. We thought of the possibilities: Chat, Long-eared Owl, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Whip-poor-will. We drove to a known breeding location of Long-eared Owl on the Lake Plain. One called back right away to my imitation of the call. Gray-cheeked Thrush gave its night call note. 202! We did it—a new state record. We tried several places for Whip-poor-will but for the first time on the day luck was not on our side and we ran out of time without finding a "Whip".

We had no big misses but Red-throated Loon, Bufflehead, Merlin, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Bonaparte's Gull, and Clay-colored Sparrow were all seen in areas we visited by other birders during the weekend. Too bad there wasn't more shorebird habitat this spring. With some more shorebirds we might have been able to hit 210.

## **August 31, 2003 Field Trip Along the Canadian Lakeshore for Shorebirds**

*by Mike Hamilton*

Charged up with news of the previous day's successes, eight of us worked our way along the north shore of Lake Erie from Rose Hill Road (Bertie Bay) to Rock Point Provincial Park and the nearby sod farms. We soon discovered that an exodus had occurred overnight, probably enhanced by north winds. Nonetheless at Stonemill Road we had excellent close-up looks at a Baird's Sandpiper both in profile and flying, showing its long wings, as well as 2 Pectorals, both yellowlegs, Semipalmated, Least and Spotted Sandpipers, a Short-billed Dowitcher, Semipalmated Plovers and many Killdeer. Prospect, Morgan's and Grabell Points had few shorebirds but did have a few Caspian Terns and 2 Green-winged Teal. At Rock Point there were moderate shorebird numbers but no new ones and a Blue-winged Teal.

Although numbers had declined, the sod farms north of the Feeder Canal Road and along Poth Road produced Black-bellied and Golden Plovers, a couple still in striking breeding plumage, Horned Larks and many Killdeer (it seems like there has been a bumper crop of Killdeer this year as they are all over the place).

On the way home we checked out Mohawk Point, which had been productive for shorebirds on survey day but was void of shorebirds today, as well as Sugarloaf Point, where there were a few yellowlegs, peeps

and Semipalmated Plovers in the bay on the east side of the point. We noted the great variation in the bill length of Semipalmated Sandpipers evidenced by two birds side by side here.

We saw 12 shorebird species for the day totaling around 170 individuals and enjoyed gorgeous weather.

## **Concerns over Wind Turbine Project**

*by Gil Randell for a press release—August 21, 2003.*

WESTFIELD, NY--Concerns regarding the proposed electricity-generating wind-turbine project in the towns of Ripley and Westfield were voiced this week at three meetings. Over 100 people attended a meeting at Eason Hall held by the Chautauqua County Citizens for Responsible Wind Power on Monday, August 18<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of that meeting was to prepare for the two hearings held by the towns of Westfield and Ripley regarding the scope of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) to be developed in conjunction with the project.

More than 125 people attended the afternoon and evening scoping meetings held by the town boards on Thursday, August 21, 2003. The two scoping sessions were intended to identify the issues to be addressed by the DEIS required by the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). At the meetings, thirty people spoke critically of the project; three spoke in its favor. Many of those at the meetings who did not speak have either submitted written comments on the SEQRA process or intend to.

A number of deficiencies were identified in the draft scope of study for the DEIS. These deficiencies include the scope's proposed treatment of safety issues; the project's possible negative effect on area grape farms; the project's negative effects on the area's scenic beauty; the adequacy of local zoning laws to protect neighbors of the project; the intrusion of loud, industrial noise into a quiet, rural area; the expected negative economic impacts; and the possible killing of migrating, nesting and wintering birds.

Coordinator of the Ripley Hawk Watch (RHW) Len DeFrancisco cited deficiencies in the scope of the bird study being performed in conjunction with the DEIS. The bird study at this point has only looked at the Spring 2003 migration. Mr. DeFrancisco pointed out, "Another Spring study including a radar component needs to be done. One year, especially this year, with fog, rain and snow negatively impacting the raptor migration, just isn't sufficient." In spite of severe weather interfering with migration patterns this Spring, the RHW documented more than 19,000 migrating raptors and more than 100 migrating bald



and golden eagles passing through the area proposed for the wind turbines. The RHW also reported a number of sightings of bald eagles that appeared to be local birds, which were not included in the count of migrating birds.

Gil Randell, Chairman of RHW's Public Policy Committee, supported the need for extending the study into the Spring, Summer, and Fall of 2004, saying, "the importance of extending the study into next year's nesting season has become even greater now that we have good evidence of bald eagles nesting near the proposed turbine project." Mr. Randell cautioned against trivializing the threat the project poses to migrating and nesting eagles and said, "People have said to me we should be happy to trade a couple of dead eagles for a bit more electricity and some money to support the town's budget. But the town boards and everyone involved with the project should understand that, under the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Act, injuring or killing an eagle can result in imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000 for an individual or \$500,000 for an organization." Mr. Randell added, "The threat this project poses to migrating and nesting eagles and other protected birds is a serious one."

Attorney for Chautauqua Citizens for Responsible Wind Power, Arthur Giacalone, pointed out in a nine-page letter submitted to the towns a number of procedural and substantive problems with the SEQRA process as administered by the towns of Ripley and Westfield. Among the substantive problems cited by Mr. Giacalone's letter was the draft scope's failure to include a close examination of "the potential adverse impact of the proposed 34-turbine wind energy project on the existing community character, including the conflict between the proposed action and the goals expressed in each town's comprehensive plan."

## **An Early Mallard Custody Battle?**

*by Bill Watson*

On May 3, 2003, I was birding in Amherst State Park (Williamsville Glen) when my attention was drawn to a quacking Mallard. Upon investigating, I was surprised to see a male and female Mallard and ten good-sized chicks. Although Canada Goose goslings are often seen at the beginning of May, the first Mallard ducklings usually appear later in the month. *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* lists April 24th as an early date for an unfledged juvenile Mallard. *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region* does not contain any unfledged Mallard dates; however, New York State Atlas 2000 data supplied by Kimberley Corwin reveals that there are three earlier records

of unfledged juvenile Mallards in the Niagara Region:

(1) On April 27, 2000, a good-sized group of unfledged juveniles was observed in Block 1775d by Edward Ratajczak at Tifft Nature Preserve; (2) On May 1, 2001, a nest with young was observed in block 2075a; (3) On May 2, 2000, unfledged Mallards were observed in block 1976a by Robert and Donna DeLeon off Hopkins Road at Margaret Louise Park.

Although the May 3rd observation is not the earliest sighting of unfledged Mallards, their behavior was very interesting. The male and female Mallards were serenely swimming by the shore of Ellicott Creek with ten downy chicks. Then a second female Mallard approached the Mallard pair and their chicks, but every time she got too close to them, the male Mallard would take to the air and dive at the intruder. The intruding female would then seek refuge at a distance of about fifteen to twenty yards, but after less than a minute she would again approach the pair of Mallards and the ten chicks. All the time the distressed intruding female was quacking. In contrast the pair of Mallards acted rather tranquil, except when the male would make a diving charge at the tenacious intruder. The sequence of the encroaching female attempting to join the Mallard family, only to be driven off by the drake mallard, was witnessed three times.

Oddly, the female's final approach to the Mallard pair and the chicks was tolerated by the male Mallard, and surprisingly, the ten chicks left the pair of Mallards and followed the vociferous intruding female Mallard away from the creek. Apparently it was the intruding Mallard hen that was the true parent of the ten unfledged juvenile Mallards!

Why was the Mallard pair swimming with the ten ducklings, and why was the male Mallard driving off what appeared to be an intruding female? Perhaps what first seemed to be a custody battle was actually a territorial battle. Had the mother Mallard and her downy chicks drifted downstream into the territory of the Mallard pair? It is likely that the male Mallard was simply attempting to drive out an intruding family from the territory in which he intended to raise his progeny. His attacks were so furious, that the mother was driven too far away for her offspring to follow. It was only after she landed about ten feet inland from the shore nearest her swimming chicks, and the chicks left the water to join her, that the dispute was terminated and peace was restored.

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Beardslee, C. S. and Mitchell. 1965. *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*. Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, vol. 22.

Corwin, K. Personal Communications. July 2003.

DeLeon, R. Personal Communications. July 2003.

Ratajczak, E. Personal Communications. July 2003.



BOS website

<http://birds.rtpi.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
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Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
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## September – November Calendar

**September 21: Western Lake Ontario Plain.** Leaders Tom and Susan O'Donnell (716-284-5569 or TMO'Donnell@adelphia.net) Meet at 8:00 AM at Tops on Center Street in Lewiston.

**September 24: BOS Meeting** at 7:30 PM. Jean Iron will give a slide presentation on Polar Bear Prov. Park. In July/August 2002 and again in 2003, Jean was a member of a Ministry of Natural Resources crew banding Snow, Ross's, and Canada Geese on the Ontario coast of Hudson Bay in Polar Bear Prov. Park.

**October 8: BOS Meeting** at 7:30. Judy Seiler will discuss the Messinger Woods Wildlife Care and Educational Center.

**October 12: BOS Annual October Count.** Mike Hamilton 881-6709.

**October 18: Saturday. Batavia WWTP/Iroquois NWR.** Leader: Mike Morgante 683-4819. Meet 8:30 AM at the WWTP, end of Industrial Blvd., off of Pearl Rd. (Rt. 33) in Batavia 1 1/2 miles west of Rt. 98.

**October 25: Saturday. Lake Ontario Plain.** Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com ). Meet at 8 AM at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104.

**October 31 through November 2, 2003.** Annual meeting of FNYSSBC at Athenaeum Hotel, Chatauqua Institute. The speaker on Saturday evening will be John Rappole, Research Coordinator at the Conservation and Research Center of the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park.

**November 12: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM Thomas P. LeBlanc will discuss Mapping Avian Productivity and Survivorship at the James A. Zaepfel Nature Sanctuary and Research Center (see [www.zaepfel.org](http://www.zaepfel.org)).

**November 17: Niagara River trip with Rochester GOS.** Meet at 9:00 AM at Fort Niagara State Park in the parking lot just outside the old fort. Leaders: BOS MikeHamilton (881-6709) and GOS Bob Spahn.

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2820.*

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# The PROTHONOTARY

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### THE MONTH: August

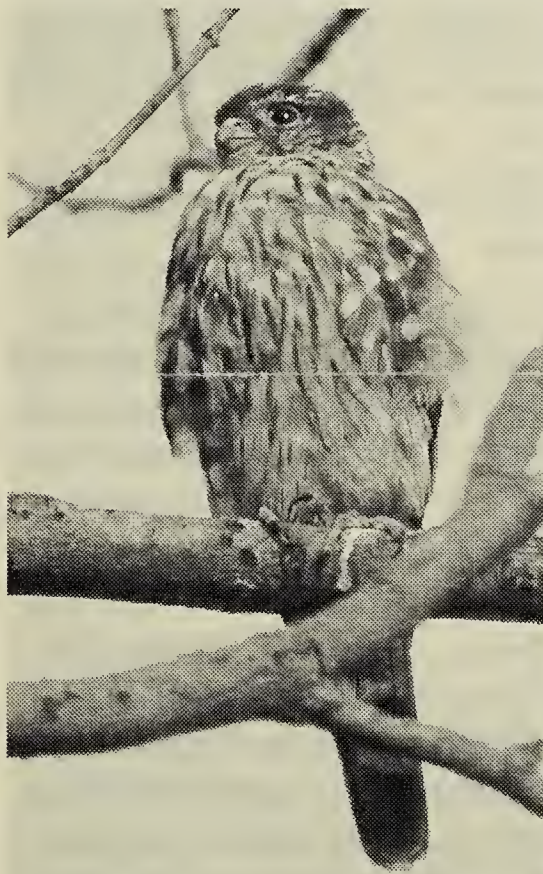
by Willie D'Anna

August began like the previous two summer months, cloudy and wet. The last 19 days, however, were mostly sunny and virtually rain-free. This gave the soil a chance to finally dry out. The month's average temperature at the Buffalo-Niagara Airport was 70.8 degrees, 1.7 degrees above normal and the 2.47 inches of rain was 1.4 inches below normal. Nearly all of the rain, 2.34 inches, fell during the first 12 days. As often occurs in the summer, the southern tier received much greater amounts of precipitation, though as with the northern region, most of it fell early in the month. At 56% of possible, sunshine was just 4% below average. (Meteorological data from the National Weather Service web site: [http://www.erh.noaa.gov/buf/climate\\_information.htm](http://www.erh.noaa.gov/buf/climate_information.htm))

Summer thunderstorms are the main factor affecting bird mortality during the nesting season. By August though vegetative growth tends to soak up excess precipitation and also mitigate to some extent the effects of high wind. As well, many birds have already fledged from the nest. Cold fronts spur south-bound migration, creating a turnover in the shorebirds and an influx of migrant

warblers and other passerines. After a front went through on the 29<sup>th</sup>, small waves of warblers were reported at various locations, though apparently, no large fallouts were observed. With the exceptions of Yellow-rumped Warbler and Northern Waterthrush, all

of the expected species were reported.



Merlin

Courtesy of Willie D'Anna

Peter Yoerg has diligently monitored and documented with verification reports, the Merlin roost at the University of Buffalo's Main Street campus. Thought to be only a winter phenomenon, Yoerg was surprised to find up to three birds there this July and August. The Merlin normally breeds north of our Region but, especially during the last decade, it has spread southward into the Adirondack mountains (Spahn 1998). In the spring of this

year, the first historic nesting south of the Adirondacks in New York was discovered in a cemetery in the city of Binghamton (Petuh 2003). Merlins typically nest in forest regions adjacent to large openings (Spahn 1998). However, in recent decades it has moved into the cities of the Great Plains in Saskatchewan, where it is prospering (Bailey 2002). In these cities Merlins use old crows' nests hidden in the thick boughs of mature spruce trees (Bailey 2002), a habitat that seems prevalent enough in Buffalo also. Late spring and summer Merlins in our Region should be carefully watched for any evidence of breeding.

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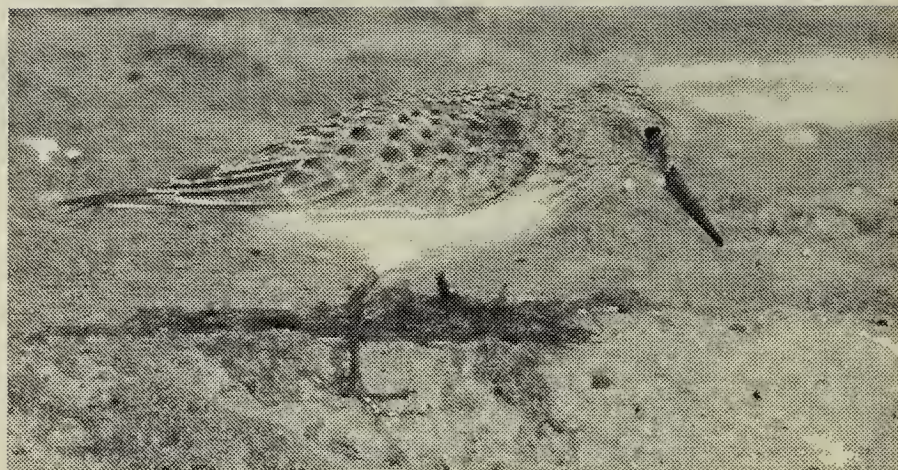
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Mike Morgante  
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The southbound shorebird migration is in full swing in August, and the Canadian Lake Erie shoreline typically attracts the most birds in our Region, as well as the most birders. This month saw high numbers of White-rumped Sandpipers there and a possible record count of Baird's Sandpipers at three locations by this writer (Rock Point, Grabbell Point, Windmill Point). It was good to see the reports from Machias in Cattaraugus County by Mike DeSha, as areas away from Lake Erie and the Alabama Swamps typically see very few shorebirds.

August is the month that the first influx of Bonaparte's Gulls occurs and the 45 birds seen at Woodlawn Beach on the 31<sup>st</sup> are evidence of that. Historically, much larger

numbers could be found near the Peace Bridge on the Niagara River and with them, the occasional Franklin's or Little Gull. However, the last decade has not seen the August concentrations of the past. Similarly,



Baird's Sandpiper

Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna

large congregations of Black Terns no longer occur at the Peace Bridge. Perhaps related, this writer noted only very low numbers of Common Terns (maximum count less than five) along the Canadian Lake Erie shoreline this month where in most years several dozen to several hundred are seen. Hopefully, this is just a blip on the radar screen but it certainly bears watching.

The best rarities this August were Eared Grebe, Western Sandpiper, and Red-necked Phalarope with lesser highlights being Canvasback, Long-tailed Duck, Forster's Tern, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and Golden-winged Warbler.

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- Bailey, M. (2002). Changing Predator-Prey Relationships in Urban Areas in Saskatchewan. *Birders Journal* 11(4):142-144.  
Petuh, M. N. (2003). Merlin Breeds in Broome County: First Historic Nesting South of the Adirondacks. *The Kingbird* 53(3):203-204.  
Spahn, R. G. (1998). Merlin (*Falco columbarius*). In *Bull's Birds of New York State* (E. Levine, ed.). Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y. p. 201-202.

## Peregrine Falcon Nesting Report for the 2003 Season

by Bill Burch

Two pairs of peregrines were active in the nearby region. The news is that the Goat Island site now is occupied by a different female and a different male. They fledged two young. The Statler Towers nest box in Buffalo was occupied for the fifth year by the pair that took over the box in 1999. They fledged three young.



Western Sandpiper

Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna



Only last year were we able to learn the identity of the Statler female through her leg band. She was banded in a cliff-side nest in New Brunswick, Canada, 700 miles east of Buffalo in 1998. She laid her first egg here at the remarkably young age of 10 months. Her mate, lacking the large-lettered band, has not yet been identified. However, he does have the aluminum USFWS band on his left leg, on which I have been able to read four numbers and their placement in the nine-digit sequence. I have asked Mark Kandel of the DEC to forward this information to the USGS Banding Laboratory in the hope that their computer can use this to identify the peregrine.

This year the Buffalo female laid four eggs, the dates being April 1, 3, 5 and 7. Of these, only three hatched, the dates being May 8, 10 and 12. The sex, determined during banding, was one female and two males.

The three chicks were banded at the age of three weeks on May 30. The banding was done on the first floor in the old US Airways office. The banding team was from the DEC and included Mark Kandel, Mike Allen, John Curtiss and Patty Nelson. The largest chick, a female, was named "Big Bird". The larger male was named "David" and the smaller, "Tim". Banding took about 30 minutes, ending around 11 a.m. Ten minutes later both adults were back on the perches, but hadn't yet entered the box to inspect the chicks. Two TV channels had the banding on the evening news, and Reporter Brian Baskin wrote a good account for the next day's *Buffalo News*.

There is some uncertainty as to the fledging dates. The website was inoperative June 14-18, and the writer was out of town June 9-20. Although the nest monitor was working, we had little input from passersby. Only one young was seen in the box on June 19, and this fledged on June 20. This was most likely the female rather than one of the two males. It is reported that females, which are larger and develop more slowly, usually take flight later than males. Experience at the Statler bears this out. Estimated fledging dates of June 16 and 17 were assigned to the males.

Although our fledgling peregrines have had mishaps in the past, mainly in falling exhausted to the street and being picked up, this year the female fledgling underwent an incredible misadventure, and survived it with little evidence of harm. On June 23 at 9:00 a.m. of her third day of flight she made a gross mistake and flew through a glass window of one of the higher downtown office buildings. Then, after a short pause, she leaped through the hole and glided away. The superintendent of the building asked Mark Kandel and me not to pub-

licize the event. His position may in time change, when the details can be made more public.

On June 30, a week after the window episode, I was able to see from high in the Rand Building the entire family of five peregrines on ledges of the Liberty Building. When food was brought to the female fledgling and a sibling by their parents, she won the ensuing struggle and took most of it. Then she flew and returned 12 minutes later. She seemed to fly strongly and to walk properly.

On July 11, I watched the peregrines for three hours, hoping to see how the female fledgling was faring, but I was disappointed. I saw the two adults and the two male fledglings but not the female.

On July 15, I was at the Rand for two hours. I could see two adults and one fledgling. While the three were flying I tried to determine their size but I couldn't be sure. Since the two male fledglings were usually together, this single fledgling might have been the female. On July 18 a five hour watch revealed only the two adults. The young had become hard to trace.

### **The Goat Island Peregrines**

A new female is occupying the nest site on the Goat Island cliffs. Leg bands show that she was hatched in Pittsburgh, PA, at the Gulf Tower nest on May 6, 2001. Her mate has no leg band. This was reported on the website of the Canadian Peregrine Foundation which also reported two fledglings, the same number I saw July 3 cavorting over the gorge near the Canadian side.

The former pair here, named by the Canadians as Amelia (Earhart) and Father Hennepin (referred to as Hennie) first nested on the Canadian side in a perfect spot for viewing in 1998. Next year they moved to Goat Island. Amelia was from London, Ontario, hatched June 10, 1996. She would have been seven years old in 2003. The fate of the pair is unknown. A nest takeover often is violent.

John Shiposki, a peregrine watcher and photographer from Niagara Falls, NY, says these birds accept persons and usually in the morning will fly in and sit on the large flat stones of Terrapin Point within 25 feet of a quiet observer. (The new occupants may not be so tolerant.) The best time to watch the cliff nest site, from Terrapin Point, is from 4-7 p.m. when it is often bathed in sunlight.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	16; 30	1	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	30	1	Rock Point PP	D'Anna
Pied-billed Grebe	9	20	Iroquois NWR	Watson
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	24	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
D.-crested Cormorant	9	42	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	21; 22	811; 217	Buckhorn I; Motor I.	Watson
"	27	270,170 + 46 nests	Mohawk I; Reef Light- house	Watson
Great Egret	1	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	1 - 31	1 - 3	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	3; 18	2; 1	Fort Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	5; 9	7; 1	Motor I; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	9; 16	42; 20	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	16	2	Windmill Pt., Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	17	4	Crystal Beach	Morgante
"	31	2	Iroquois NWR	Jones
"	31	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Black-cr. Night-Heron	5	6	Motor I.	Watson
"	31	10	Tifft NP	Morgante
Mute Swan	3 - 30	4 records	Fort Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16; 30	9 ad; 14 ad	Windmill Pt., Ont.	D'Anna et al
Gadwall	9	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
American Wigeon	9; 16	2; 5	Batavia WWTP; Iro- quois NWR	Watson
American Black Duck	24	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Blue-winged Teal	9	7	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	17	3	Port Colborne	Morgante
"	23; 26	4; 3	Machias	DeSha
"	24	16	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Northern Shoveler	9	6	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	24	57	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	30	2	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Northern Pintail	24	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Green-winged Teal	9	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	23; 26	2; 2	Machias	DeSha
"	24	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Canvasback	<u>9; 24</u>	1; 1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Redhead	24	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Ring-necked Duck	21	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Long-tailed Duck	<u>9</u> F	1	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	Pawlicki
Common Merganser	5	1	Beaver Island SP	Pawlicki



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	27	2	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	Watson
Ruddy Duck	9	205	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	24	251; 1	Batavia WWTP; Tonawanda WMA	Watson, Lazarczyk
Osprey	9 - 30	1 ad, 3 yg	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	24	1 yg	Tonawanda WMA	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	27	1	Tiff NP	Andrle
"	30	1	Dunkirk	Mosher, Chilton
Bald Eagle	3	1 imm	Fort Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	9; 16	1 imm; 2 imm	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	16	1 ad	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	17	1 ad, 1 imm	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	19	1 ad	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	23	2 ad	Machias	DeSha
"	27	1 imm	Williamsville	Pawlicki
"	31	1 imm	Irving	Andrle
Broad-winged Hawk	17; 28	1; 1 imm	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	1 - 30	4 reports	Alfred	Brooks
Merlin	<u>1 - 24</u>	5 records (3 max)	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	<u>27</u>	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg
"	<u>31</u>	1	Goat Island	D'Anna et al
Sora	3	1	Watts Flats WMA	Berry
Black-bellied Plover	16F	1	Morgan's Pt., Ont.	Potter, D'Anna
"	24	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	27	11	Fort Erie	Watson
"	27; 30	84; 18	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg
"	30	75	Moulton, Ont.	D'Anna et al
* Amer. Golden-Plover	27F	4	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg
"	30	17	Moulton, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	30	1	Fort Erie	Yoerg
Semipalmated Plover	3 - 30	4 records	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	16; 27	2; 6	Clarence; Rock Point PP	Watson
Greater Yellowlegs	3	18	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	14	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna
"	26	1	Machias	DeSha
Lesser Yellowlegs	9	23	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	22	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	24	32	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	26	3	Machias	DeSha
Solitary Sandpiper	10	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14; 27	2; 4	Wheatfield	D'Anna
"	26	1	Machias	DeSha
Upland Sandpiper	16	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	27	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg
Ruddy Turnstone	3	7	Fort Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
Sanderling	27	3	Rock Point PP	Watson
Semipalm. Sandpiper	9; 27	6; 41	Batavia WWTP; Mor- gan's Pt., Ont.	Watson
<u>Western Sandpiper</u>	27	1	Rock Point PP	Yoerg
"	30	1	Rock Point PP	D'Anna et al



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Least Sandpiper	9	22	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	24	16	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
White-r. Sandpiper	10F	5	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16	23	Grabell Pt., Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	17	1	Crystal Beach	Morgante
"	27	2; 1	Rock Pt. PP; Wainfleet	Yoerg
* Baird's Sandpiper	24F	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Mosher, Benton
"	24F	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	27	1; 3	Rock Point PP; Dun- nville	Yoerg
"	30	17	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	30	8	Dunkirk Harbor	Chilton, Mosher
"	30	35	N. shore, L. Erie	D'Anna et al
Pectoral Sandpiper	3; 30	3; 3	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	9; 16	3; 3	Batavia WWTP; Clar- ence	Watson
* Stilt Sandpiper	14F	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna
"	27	1	Rock Point PP	Yoerg
Short-b. Dowitcher	27	1	Rock Point PP	Watson
Wilson's Snipe	10	1	W. Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	8	Machias	DeSha
"	31	6	Iroquois NWR	Jones
Red-necked Phalarope	17F	1 imm	Ridgeway, Ont.	Morgante
Bonaparte's Gull	27	7	Rock Point PP	Watson
"	31	45	Woodlawn Beach SP	Andrle
Caspian Tern	9; 16	1; 1	Batavia WWTP; Iro- quois NWR	Watson
"	27	7	Fort Erie	Watson
* Forster's Tern	17F	1	Ridgeway, Ont.	Morgante
"	24	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Mosher, Benton
Common Nighthawk	18F; 28	2; 15	Williamsville	Pawlicki; Pawlicki et al
"	20	2	Egbertsville	Morgante
"	23	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	25	2	Lockport	Jones
"	28	6	Goat Island	S & T O'Donnell
Whip-poor-will	3	4	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-headed Wdpr.	17	1	Port Colborne	Morgante
"	18; 30	3; 3	Fort Erie	Yoerg
"	27	1 ad, 1 imm	Fort Erie	Watson
"	30	3	Bertie, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Yellow-b. Flycatcher	24F	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Philadelphia Vireo	24F	1	Rock Point PP	Pawlicki, Harris
"	29	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki et al
"	31	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
Common Raven	2; 22	2; 1	Andover; Alfred	Brooks
"	16	4	Hanging Bog WMA	Pawlicki et al
Cliff Swallow	7	1 imm	Tifft NP	Andrle
Red-br. Nuthatch	24	1	Rock Point PP	Pawlicki, Harris
Carolina Wren	4	2	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	10	1	Lewiston	Morgante
"	17	3	Port Colborne	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	31	2	Tifft NP	Morgante
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	16	1	Newstead	Watson
"	31	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Northern Mockingbird	10	10	Artpark	Morgante
Blue-winged Warbler	25F	1	Goat Island	Potter, D'Anna
"	29	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki et al
"	31	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Andrle
Golden-wing. Warbler	28	1	Hartland.	Watson
Tennessee Warbler	19F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	27	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	30	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Nashville Warbler	17	2	Franklinville	Pawlicki et al
"	31F	1	Tifft NP	Morgante
Chestnut-s. Warbler	25F	1	Goat Island	Potter, D'Anna
"	26	2	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
Magnolia Warbler	24F	1	Rock Point PP	Pawlicki, Harris
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	31	1	Goat Island	Potter, D'Anna
Cape May Warbler	28F	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	25F	1	Goat Island	Potter, D'Anna
"	25F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	29F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
Blackburnian Warbler	27F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
"	27F	1	Rock Point PP	Yoerg
"	30	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Pine Warbler	17	3	Franklinville	Pawlicki et al
"	27F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
Prairie Warbler	7	1	Andover	Brooks
Bay-breasted Warbler	25F	1	Goat Island	Potter, D'Anna
Blackpoll Warbler	29F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki et al
"	30	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Black-and-white Warbler	24F	1	Rock Point PP	Pawlicki, Harris
"	27	3	Rock Point PP	Yoerg
Ovenbird	26	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
Wilson's Warbler	26F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki
"	27	1	Rock Point PP	Watson
Canada Warbler	26F	1	Amherst SP	Pawlicki et al
"	27	1	Eggertsville	Morgante
"	27	1	Rock Point PP	Yoerg
Bobolink	3	1	Buffalo	Yoerg

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:** 265

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:** 4

**Total for the year 2003:** 269

**Statisticians' Note I:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

**Statisticians' Note II:** Changes in the AOU Check-List of Birds Affecting Species Recorded in the BOS Study Area. The Auk issue of July 2003 contains the Forty-Fourth Supplement to the AOU's Check-List of North American Birds, with changes as follows: 1. Rock Dove to Rock Pigeon, 2. Eastern Screech-Owl's generic name fom *Otus* to *Megascops*, 3. The scientific name of Snowy Owl, *Nyctea scandiaca*, to *Bubo scandiacus*, 4. Deletion of Three-toed Woodpecker, *Picoides tridactylus* and replacement with American Three-toed Woodpecker, *Picoides dorsalis*, 5. Black-capped Chickadee specific name from *atri-capilla* to *atricapillus*, 6. Ovenbird specific name from *aurocapillus* to *aurocapilla*, 7. Orders Anseriformes and Galliformes placed before the Order Gaviiformes. See The Auk Supplement for explanation of this change in sequence (p.923-924).



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# New Members!!!!

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**Bujnicki, Robert & Marilyn** *Assoc. '97*  
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<b>B.O.S. Membership Committee Annual Report - Oct. 8, 2003</b>		We welcomed 13 new members this year. 16 members did not renew their membership. We regret that 6 members died over the past year:
<b>Fellows</b>	<u>5</u>	
<b>Citation</b>	<u>4</u>	
<b>Active</b>	<u>77</u>	Dean Amadon
<b>Associate</b>	<u>107</u>	Walter Klabunde
<b>Corresponding</b>	<u>31</u>	Barbara Nutting
		Arthur Rosche
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>224</u>	Olga Rosche
		William Townsend.

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 & '97  
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**Wilcove, David** *Assoc. '74*  
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## November – December 10 Calendar

**November 12: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM Thomas P. LeBlanc will discuss mapping avian productivity and survivorship at the James A. Zaepfel Nature Sanctuary and Research Center (see [www.zaepfel.org](http://www.zaepfel.org)).

**November 16: Niagara River trip with Rochester GOS.** Meet at 9:00 AM at Fort Niagara State Park in the parking lot just outside the old fort. Leaders: BOS MikeHamilton (881-6709) and GOS Bob Spahn.

**November 17: Niagara Frontier Entomological Society.** 7:30 PM at Daemen College (Bldg. 107) Don Brasure will present "British war-like ant invasion of Tifft Nature Preserve and their eradication" and Bob Andrie will present "The Wandering Glider Dragonfly".

**December 6: Saturday. Niagara River for Gulls.** Meet at 8:00 AM at the upstream parking lot on Goat Island (no fee at this time of year). If the bridge to Goat Island is closed, we will meet at the bridge entrance. Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or [dannapotter@wzrd.com](mailto:dannapotter@wzrd.com)).

**December 10: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM. Jim Berry, President of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History in Jamestown, NY will present Roger Tory Peterson, the Role He Played in the Modern Environmental Movement. This will be followed with the annual holiday celebration. Please bring a treat to share and enjoy an evening of birding friendship.

*Note: Unless otherwise indicated field trips are a full day in length. If you are interested in leading a field trip, please contact Bill Watson at 695-2826.*

**BOS Nametags:** If anyone wants a BOS nametag please contact Karen Landau at 941-3869 or [kjlandau@localnet.com](mailto:kjlandau@localnet.com) by December 15. The cost is \$3.50.



# The PROTHONOTARY

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## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 69, No. 10 October, 2003

### THE MONTH: September

by Robert DeLeon

As we are accustomed in Western New York, September transitions the sultry summer weather to the cooler autumn weather reminding us that winter will be here all too soon. The first 25 days of the month were slightly warmer than normal, very dry and with average sunshine, providing excellent conditions for following the fall migration. Only the last week of the month exhibited substantial rainfall and a significant drop in the temperature.

A glance over the noteworthy observations indicates that at least eighteen species of warblers were observed in modest numbers. Other than Don Roberson's report of 27 Nashville warblers at Goat Island on September 26<sup>th</sup>, there were no reports that anyone struck pay dirt with a substantial warbler fall-out. For the most part, the number and variety of waterfowl and shorebirds were unexceptional. Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant seems to be the local staging area for Ruddy Ducks, as indicated by Bill Watson's observation of 541 Ruddy Ducks on September 28<sup>th</sup>. In keeping with previous years' observations, Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant again proved a reliable site for finding Eared Grebes, as exemplified by the most recent observation of two on September 13<sup>th</sup> by Bill Watson. A number of observations of Great

Egrets at Tifft Nature Preserve, Beaver Island State Park, Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge and other places by a number of observers give testimony to the increasing population of this species in the BOS/Western New York area.

Another group of birds being found more often in this area are falcons. In addition to the pair of Peregrine Falcons nesting in downtown Buffalo, Mike Morgante, Bill Watson and others observed a Peregrine at Woodlawn State Park. Merlins seemed to be everywhere with a total of nine different observations at six different locations made by Peter Yoerg, Willie D'Anna, Betsy Potter, Don Roberson and Mike Morgante.

The biggest non-event of the month was hurricane Isabel on September 19<sup>th</sup> that foiled meteorologists' predictions of severe winds and torrential rains and flooding. The hurricane track was predicted correctly until it hit the coast. Isabel then veered a bit further westward over Ohio, sparing Western New York. However, *ill blows the wind that profits nobody*, and Isabel was no exception. There were a number of hurricane birds graciously blown into our area by Isabel. Mike Morgante observed a Red-necked Phalarope at LaSalle Park on September 19<sup>th</sup>, followed by a second phalarope of undetermined species at Fort Niagara State Park on September 21<sup>st</sup>. A number of Wilson's Storm-Petrels, birds of a completely pelagic nature, made a rare appearance in the BOS territory. A single individual was observed at Woodlawn Beach State Park on September 20<sup>th</sup>, much to the delight of Mike Hamilton, Willie D'Anna, Betsy Potter, Mike Morgante and others. Later that same day Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter observed two or more on Chautauqua Lake. In a second-hand report, Willie also noted that five Wilson's Storm-Petrels were found at the same location on the 19<sup>th</sup> by another group of birders. Finally, the observation of the month was another pelagic species, certainly precipitated by Isabel. A Black-capped Petrel was observed at Waverly Beach,

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Fort Erie Ontario by Willie D'Anna, Bill Watson, Terry Osborne and others on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Like the Wilson's Storm-Petrels, this Atlantic Ocean species is entirely pelagic, coming ashore only at rare intervals to breed. Only a very few reports of this species exist for the Great Lakes area. In the last 35 plus years of the BOS records, this species was recorded only in the wake of hurricane Fran in September 1996.

The end of September brings the bulk of the fall migration to a conclusion. Lets hope that the upcoming winter is mild and brings some great rarities to our region

### Wood Thrush Decline Linked to Acid Rain

*from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology*

ITHACA, N.Y. -- A large-scale study has for the first time shown a clear link in North America between acid rain and widespread declines across the breeding range of a songbird, the wood thrush. Calcium depletion affecting the birds' food is a possible cause, Cornell University ecologists say. [Citizen science at Cornell: [http://www.birds.cornell.edu/whatwedo\\_citizenscience.htm](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/whatwedo_citizenscience.htm)]

Using data collected by thousands of volunteer citizen-scientists in the Birds in Forested Landscapes project, scientists at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology showed that the wood thrush is less likely to attempt to breed in regions that receive high levels of acid rain. The finding is reported in the current Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (*PNAS* Vol.99 No. 16) by Ralph S. Hames, a postdoctoral associate at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology who conducted the

### Editors Note: Buffalo Museum of Science

As many of you are aware, the Buffalo Museum of Science has embarked on a rather controversial "revitalization plan" that has negatively affected our society. A few examples: the museum scientific and support staff has been dramatically cutback (some say "decimated"), the open hours at Tiff Nature Preserve have been reduced by several days a week, the Allegheny Program has been terminated, and even endowed lectureships have been interrupted. Lawsuits have been threatened. As BOS council president, Mike Hamilton is organizing a council meeting at 6:30 PM, December 10 in the Cummings Room, the purpose of which is to discuss this subject and become better informed. Any interested party can attend or you can send your comments directly to Mike or Gerry Rising for inclusion in this discussion

research with colleagues Kenneth V. Rosenberg, James D. Lowe, Sara E. Barker and André A. Dhondt. [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences: <http://www.pnas.org/>.]

Acid rain is the broad term used to describe several ways that a weak solution of inorganic acids, such as nitric and sulfuric acid, falls out of the atmosphere as rain, snow, mist and fog. Sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) are the primary causes of acid rain. In the United States, about two-thirds of all SO<sub>2</sub> and one-fourth of all NO<sub>x</sub> come from electric-power generation that relies on burning fossil fuels, such as coal.

High elevations, such as the Adirondack, Appalachian and Great Smoky mountains as well as the Allegheny Plateau, where the amount of acid deposited in precipitation could be highest, show long-term declines of up to nearly 5 percent annually in wood thrush populations. Although the exact mechanism leading to the declines is still unknown, it may well be related to the leaching of calcium from the soil by acid rain, according to Hames. European studies of heavy acid-rain regions similarly have linked declining bird populations to acid-rain-induced depletion of soil calcium.

Previous studies by other investigators had shown that calcium-depletion can affect breeding birds in a number of ways, Hames notes. In particular, shortages of calcium-rich foods, such as snails and snail shells, might be critical at egg-laying time, when calcium demand is highest for female birds, or during the nesting period, when calcium supplements are often provided to growing young.

However, low levels of soil calcium might also



affect a wide range of prey, such as earthworms, millipedes and centipedes, pillbugs and other insects that adult birds need to nourish themselves and feed their young. Fallen, decaying leaves and other natural litter on the forest floor could decompose more slowly under acidic conditions. At the same time, acidic conditions could also increase the amounts of toxic aluminum and heavy metals (such as lead, cadmium and mercury) that the wood thrush ingests.

"They may be finding less good-quality food and having to work harder to find it," Hames says. "This could potentially lead individual thrushes to attempt breeding elsewhere." He speculates that birds might assess the available food supplies each spring before deciding where -- and whether -- to nest and reproduce.

The Cornell scientists set about modeling the effect of acid rain on the wood thrush by predicting the probability of a bird attempting to breed at a given location, based on the amount of acid rain falling there. First they gathered existing data from sources such as the National Atmospheric Deposition Project's National Trends Network that monitors pollution in rainfall, as well as detailed soil maps from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Next, the scientists combined the precipitation and soil data with information about the regional abundance of the wood thrush, as reported by the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). A critical component of their analysis was data gathered by the volunteer citizen-scientists participating in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's ongoing Birds in Forested Landscapes (BFL) project.

BFL participants had recorded the presence or absence of breeding wood thrushes, as well as detailed information on the topography, elevation, vegetation and habitat fragmentation at more than 650 study sites across the geographic range of the species. "Massive surveys like this one and the BBS could never be accomplished without the participation of citizen-scientists," says Hames.

Cornell ecologists used the data collected in sophisticated statistical analyses to produce a model that predicted where acid rain's effects might be most severe for a bird whose life and reproductive success depend on food it finds on the forest floor. The model predicts that, after statistically adjusting for several other factors (soil, vegetation, topography, thrush abundance), the probability of a wood thrush breeding is much reduced at a highly acidified site. The negative effects of acid rain might also be heightened by such factors as high elevation and habitat fragmentation.

Population declines in other songbird species also

could be attributable -- at least in part -- to acid rain, Hames says. "There are a number of other factors that we know can hurt populations of particular species. This is also true in the case of the wood thrush," he adds. "However, in some places, there also appear to be many fewer birds than there used to be, and these often appear to be the same places most severely impacted by acid rain."

## Marcy Woods

The Bert Miller Nature Club of Fort Erie was founded in the mid 1990s with the primary purpose of protecting and preserving Marcy Woods.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with it, Marcy Woods is a 116 plus hectare site on the shore of Lake Erie that is unique in being a virtually undisturbed exemplar of a mature, highly diverse Carolinian sand dune forest. It contains various ecological communities -- ranging from dunes to wetlands -- with a broad variety of biota including numerous rare and endangered species.

For many years, the Bert Miller Nature Club has worked to broker a sale of this critical site. Lamentably, this effort failed and the property was sold to a developer last summer. Although the new owner states that he has no plans to develop the property, we believe its integrity is at great risk over the long term.

We have come to the conclusion that the only means of assuring the unassailable protection of this property is for the Province to use its power of expropriation. We ask now that the Province use this power to protect 116 hectares of irreplaceable Canadian heritage!

How you can help:

**DONATE**: Tax deductible donations to help save Marcy Woods may be sent to The Bert Miller Nature Club. P.O. Box 1088 Ridgeway ON L0S 1N0.

**WRITE** in support of the expropriation of Marcy Woods to the following Provincial Cabinet Ministers:

The Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister of Tourism and Recreation 9th floor, 900 Bay Street Toronto, Ontario M7A 2R9 Email: jim\_Bradley-mpp@ontla.ola.org

The Honourable David Ramsey, Minister of Natural Resources 6th Floor, Room 6630 Whitney Block 99 Wellesley St. W. Toronto, Ontario M7A 1W3 Email: david\_ramsey-mpp@ontla.ola.org

The Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of the Environment 12th Floor, 135 St. Clair Avenue West Toronto, Ontario M4V 1P5 Email:



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Eared Grebe	13	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson et al
* <u>Black-capped Petrel</u>	23	1	Waverly Beach, Ont.	D'Anna, Watson et al
* <u>Wilson's St.-Petrel</u>	20	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Hamilton, D'Anna, Morgante, Watson et al
"	20	2	Chautauqua Lake	D'Anna, Potter
D.-crested Cormorant	3	<u>992</u>	Buckhorn Is. SP	Watson
"	12	201	Buckhorn Is. SP	Burch
"	15	106	Motor Is.	Watson
"	27	81	Motor Is.	Burch
Great Egret	1 - 30	6 max	Tifft NP	Andrle et al
"	3	1; 5	Tifft NP; Port. Colborne	Watson; Yoerg
"	7	5	Tifft NP	Watson (BOS)
"	8; 12	5; 5	Beaver Is. SP	Hess
"	13	5	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	15	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	26	4	Tifft NP	Watson, Andrle, Bogacki
"	28	3	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
Mute Swan	9; 21	11; 13	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	28	1; 1	Olcott; Golden Hill SP	Yoerg
American Wigeon	7	2	Tifft NP	Watson (BOS)
"	13	6	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Blue-winged Teal	3; 13	2; 6	Tifft NP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
Northern Shoveler	9	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	13; 28	224; 285	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Northern Pintail	19	7	LaSalle Park	Morgante
"	28	7	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	29	30	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna
Green-winged Teal	3	30	Tifft NP	Watson
"	13; 28	15; 62	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	13; 28	2; 8	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	30	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Greater Scaup	28	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
White-winged Scoter	21F	4	Ft. Niagara SP	Morgante
"	28	4; 6	Olcott; Golden Hill SP	Yoerg
"	29	5	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna
Ruddy Duck	13; 28	260; 541	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Osprey	2	1 ad, 2 imm	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	13	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	20	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Morgante
"	21	1	Wilson Harbor	Morgante
"	28	1	Depew	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Bald Eagle	8; 14	2 imm; 1 ad	Westfield	DeFrancisco, Williams, June
"	12	1 ad, 1 imm	Ripley	DeFrancisco
"	13	1 imm	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	21	1 imm	Sheridan	Rew
Merlin	<u>3</u>	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
"	9; 21	1; 2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	10	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg
"	11; 12	4; 4	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	13; 27	1; 1	Goat Is.	D'Anna, Roberson et al
"	20	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Morgante
Peregrine Falcon	13	2 ad	Buffalo	Burch
"	20	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Watson, Morgante et al
Black-bellied Plover	3	80	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg
"	20	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Hamilton
"	21	3	Dunnville, Ont.	Hamilton
Amer. Golden-Plover	3; 10	15; 29	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg
"	9; 21	1; 2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	32	Dunnville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	10	W. Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	21	26	Dunnville, Ont.	Hamilton
Lesser Yellowlegs	13	17	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Solitary Sandpiper	9	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	14	1	W. Lincoln, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Willet	20	1	La Salle Park	Watson, Yoerg
Red Knot	14F	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
White-r. Sandpiper	3	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
"	9	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	14	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Baird's Sandpiper	3	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
"	3; 10	8; 1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
"	3; 14	1; 2	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	9	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
Pectoral Sandpiper	20	3	Batavia WWTP	Hamilton
"	26	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Andrle, Bogacki
Dunlin	9F	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
Stilt Sandpiper	3	3	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
"	13	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	14	1	Smithville, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	20	2	Batavia WWTP	Hamilton
"	28	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Short-b. Dowitcher	3; 10; 14	1; 1; 1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
"	3; 9	4; 3	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
Red-necked Phalarope	19	2	LaSalle Park	Morgante
Phalarope species	21	9	Ft. Niagara SP	Morgante
* <u>Parasitic Jaeger</u>	21	1 imm	Four Mile Creek SP	Morgante
Lesser Black-b. Gull	12F	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
"	13; 16	1; 3	Goat Is.	D'Anna, Potter
Caspian Tern	3; 7	1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson; Watson (BOS)
"	8; 12	7; 3	Beaver Is. SP	Hess
"	20L	2	Woodlawn Beach SP	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Tern	3; 10	300; 500	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
Forster's Tern	3	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
"	20	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Morgante
"	21	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Morgante, Watson, O'Donnell (BOS)
"	21	4	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	22	2	Hamburg	Rew
Common Nighthawk	3 - 24	2 - 15	Tonawanda	Hess
"	5	47	Ft. Erie	Rew, Horbett
"	6; 9; 10	6; 3; 2	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	10;13;17;28	2;10;2;1	Eggertsville	Morgante
"	13	35	Amherst	Morgante
Whip-poor-will	10	4	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
Ruby-t. Hummingbird	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
"	21	1	Bethany	Beattie
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	28	2F	Golden Hill SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	30	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna, Potter
Olive-s. Flycatcher	2F	1	Ridgeway, NY	Watson
"	13	1	Wilson	S & T O'Donnell
Eastern Wood-Pewee	13	4	Wilson	S & T O'Donnell
"	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
"	28	1	Yates	S & T O'Donnell
Least Flycatcher	8	1	Bethany	Beattie
Eastern Kingbird	7L	1	Tifft NP	Watson (BOS)
Blue-headed Vireo	21F	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
"	26; 30	1; 1	Goat Is.	Roberson
Warbling Vireo	7	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	8; 12	2; 1	Goat Is.	Roberson
"	21L	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
Philadelphia Vireo	3; 26	1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	5; 6; 7	1; 1; 1	Bethany	Beattie
"	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
"	27L	1	Goat Is.	Potter
Common Raven	14	2	<u>Charlotte</u>	Andrle
Tree Swallow	28	<u>1500</u>	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Red-br. Nuthatch	26	2	Tifft NP	Watson
Carolina Wren	3	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	15	3	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	30	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
House Wren	25; 29	1; 2	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Winter Wren	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
"	21	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	28	1	Golden Hill SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	29	2	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Golden-cr. Kinglet	13	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	26F	2	Goat Is.	Potter
"	26F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	3	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Gray-cheeked Thrush	18F	3	Eggertsville	Morgante
Swainson's Thrush	13F	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	40	Eggertsville	Morgante
"	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Hermit Thrush	30F	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Brown Thrasher	1	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna
"	3 - 5	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	3	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
American Pipit	14F	1	Olcott	Morgante
"	20	1	Hamburg	Morgante
Blue-winged Warbler	6L	1	Alfred	Brooks
Tennessee Warbler	26	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	26; 27; 30	2; 1; 1	Goat Is.	Roberson
Orange-cr. Warbler	21F	2	Pt. Abino, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26; 27	1; 1	Goat Is.	Potter, Roberson et al
"	29	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Potter
Nashville Warbler	7; 26	1; 2	Tifft NP	Watson (BOS); Watson
"	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
"	26; 28; 30	27; 2; 1	Goat Is.	Roberson
Northern Parula	26F; 27	1; 1	Goat Is.	Potter et al
Yellow Warbler	13	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	21L	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
Magnolia Warbler	9 - 28	4	Goat Is.	Roberson
Cape May Warbler	1	1	Goat Is.	D'Anna, Potter
"	26	1	Goat Is.	Roberson
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	26	3	Tifft NP	Watson
Yellow-r. Warbler	12F; 27; 28	2; 2; 3	Goat Is.	Roberson
Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	7; 26	1; 2	Tifft NP	Watson (BOS); Watson
"	8 - 30	6 max	Goat Is.	Roberson
Pine Warbler	7	1	Tifft NP	Watson (BOS)
"	9; 28	1; 1	Goat Is.	Roberson
"	21	1	Charlotte	Rew
Palm Warbler	26F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	29	5	Lancaster	Morgante
Bay-breasted Warbler	26	2	Tifft NP	Watson
Blackpoll Warbler	28	1	Goat Is.	Roberson
"	26	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Black-and-white Warb.	27	1	Goat Is.	Roberson
Ovenbird	27	1	Goat Is.	Potter, D'Anna, Roberson
Wilson's Warbler	28	1	Goat Is.	Roberson
"	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
Scarlet Tanager	21F	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
Field Sparrow	21	3	Amity Lake	Pitzrick
Fox Sparrow	28F	2	Lakeside Beach SP	S & T O'Donnell
Lincoln's Sparrow	30F	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
White-thr. Sparrow	6F	3	Alfred	Brooks
"	13	2	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	30	2	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
White-cr. Sparrow	29F	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna
Rose-br. Grosbeak	21	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Morgante
Baltimore Oriole	17L	1	Amity Lake	Pitzrick

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:** 269

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:** 3

**Total for the year 2003:** 272

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.



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## December – January Calendar

BOS website

<http://www.bosbirding.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

**December 6: Niagara River for Gulls.** Meet at 8:00 AM at the upstream parking lot on Goat Island, if closed meet at the bridge entrance. Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com).

**December 10: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM. Jim Berry, President of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History will present: Roger Tory Peterson, the Role He Played in the Modern Environmental Movement. Council Meeting.

**December 14: Sunday. Jamestown CBC.** Compiler: Bob Sundell (bird.central@madbbs.com or 716-484-2197)

**December 20: Saturday. Beaver Meadow CBC.** Compiler: Bill Michalek (585-457-3228 or michalek@buffaloaudubon.org).

**December 21: Sunday. BOS Buffalo CBC.** Compiler: Bill Bogacki (674-5781).

**December 21: Sunday. St. Bonaventure CBC.** Compiler: Regina VanScoy (716-925-7109 or vanscoy1@juno.com).

**December 27: Saturday. Oak Orchard CBC.** Compiler: Gail Seamans (585-937-5105 or gails@netacc.net).

**December 27: Saturday. Wilson-Lake Plains CBC.** Compiler: Garner Light (772-5110) garnerlight@hotmail.com

**December 28: Sunday. Niagara Falls ON-NY CBC.** Contact Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com) to work on the NY side. Contact Kayo Roy (905-892-4433 or kayoroy@niagara.com) to work on the Canadian side. All payments and data go to the compiler, Kayo Roy, 13 Kinsman Court, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada L0S 1E3.

**January 1: Thursday. Dunkirk-Fredonia CBC.** Compiler: Joanne Goetz (goetz@netsync.net or 716-673-1627) and Paul Farver 716-792-9042

**January 4: Sunday. Hamburg-East Aurora CBC.** Compiler: Mike Zebehaz (662-6987 or zebs@adelphia.net)

**January 4: Sunday. Port Colborne Christmas Bird Count.** We start by meeting at McDonald's restaurant, at the corner of Highway 3 and Highway 58 at 8 AM to organize. Compiler: Drew Campbell (drew.campbell@gm.com or voice mail at 1-800-539-2329)



# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: October

by Bill Watson

Although October was cooler than normal, on average, the weather was seasonable. The month's precipitation was 3.43 inches, which is 0.24 inches more than normal. The average temperature was 48.8 °F, only 1.9 °F below normal, making October the first month since July to have an average temperature below normal.

The only Parasitic Jaeger of the month was found by Bob Andrie at Athol Springs on the 21st, a day with fog, thunder, and southwest winds as high as 47 mph. Strong west winds are the best conditions for finding jaegers along the west shore of Lake Erie. Bad weather is good weather for jaeger hunters.

On the 15th at nearby Woodlawn Beach State Park a bird thought to be an Elegant Tern was observed, however the written verification report was rejected with a note that "additional documentation" such as "sight, photograph or specimen would be required for a first report" for "the state." This requirement is in accordance with the New York State Avian Records Committee guidelines. On that date the peak winds were due west at 46 mph.

Three Eared Grebes at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant were well documented by both Max

Mason's group on the Annual B.O.S. October Count and by members of Mike Morgante's October 18th Batavia WWTP Field Trip. This record of three Eared Grebes is only bettered by last year's October records of four Eared Grebes at the Batavia

WWTP. This is the fourth year in a row that Eared Grebes have been found at this location in October. If this trend continues, its status in the *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds; The Niagara Frontier Region* as exceptional during the first three weeks in October and very rare the last week should be reevaluated.

Another bird that has shown a remarkable increase in recent years is the subspecies referred to as Richardson's Canada Goose or *Branta canadensis hutchinsii*. Fourteen birds of this subspecies were documented at Iroquois NWR on October 13th and 18th. Sizable groups of these birds have been documented for five years in a row, and they are usually found at Ring-neck Marsh on Iroquois NWR. The fidelity to this location and the similar size of these flocks suggest the groups may be led to the location by the same lead geese.

On April 21, 1961, Thomas Bourne found a NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW on Shero Road in Boston, New York. That was the last Erie County record of that species until Jim Pawlicki found another near the Amherst Bike Path on October 6, 2003. Between the 6th and 10th this secretive bird was observed by many observers. Many reported a bright buff orange supercilium and a few thin white streaks on the back suggesting the northern Great Plains subspecies, *A. n. nelsoni*. This contrasts with two other subspecies: *A. n. alterus* (James Bay coastal) and *A. n. subvirgatus* (North Atlantic coastal). This is the only verified rare species this month requiring a written verification report sent to the New York State Avian Records Committee. Everyone who observed this bird should also send their verification report to: Jeanne Skelly New York State Avian Records Committee 420 Chili Scottsville Road Churchville, NY 14428.

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The SANDHILL CRANE documented by Don Roberson circling over Cayuga Pool at Iroquois NWR on the Buffalo Ornithological Societies' October 12th Count is only the second record of Sandhill Crane for the month of October. The first record was of two Sandhill Cranes on the 1986 October 12 Bird Count.

This October had more than its share of unusually late records. The Veery found on this year's October Count by Nick Sly and Mike Galas at Beaver Island State Park is only equaled by single Veery reports on the October 16 Counts of 1983 and 1988. On October 4th, a late Bank Swallow was seen by Willie D'Anna at Goat Island.

On October 30, Bob Andrie and Bill Bogacki found a very

late Red-eyed Vireo at Woodlawn Beach State Park. The only later record was one observed by Thorpe at Delaware Park on November 1, 1942.

On October 29, Jim Landau observed a warbler with "a bright yellow throat and breast" and a "patch of olive green-yellow" on the "back between the shoulders" which contrasted with the "gray" at Tiff Nature Preserve. This Northern Parula was documented earlier by Bob Andrie on the 25th and 28th. The only later record was documented in Hamburg by Bacon and Bourne November 10-14, 1964. Interestingly, the previous second latest Northern Parula record was also documented by Bob Andrie, sixty years earlier, on October 21, 1943, in Buffalo.

The adult male Hooded Warbler found by Carol Hardenburg in Portland is the first record of this species on a B.O. S. October Count, and is the second latest record in the Society's history.



**American Bittern**

Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna

There were also unusually high numbers of many avian species during the month of October. We have to go back to October 26, 1991 in order to have more Common Loons than the 300 seen on the 25th on the Ontario Plains Field Trip. The six Merlins seen October 22-30 are the most ever seen in this month in one day. To find a record with more than the 25 Common Nighthawks counted by

Bob Andrie in Hamburg on the 10th, one has to go back to the October 1, 1971, record of 47 Common Nighthawks counted by the McKales in Eggertsville. The month's total of 15 banded Northern Saw-whet Owls by David and Sandra Junkin is impressive. Seven of these owls were banded on the 12th as well as a Barred Owl.

The Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant continues to attract large numbers of Eared Grebes, Ruddy Ducks, Northern Shovelers, American Black Ducks, and other waterfowl species. The 2,241 Ruddy Ducks counted on the BOS Field Trip on the 18th are an all time high. The previous high of 1,569 Ruddy Ducks was counted by Kurt Fox, also at the Batavia WWTP on October 27, 2001. Only 882 were seen on the October 12th Count. Was the increase of over 1350 Ruddy Ducks caused by the migration pattern or the start of duck hunting season on the 18th? Despite its name, duck hunting is allowed on the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, and Batavia WWTP is the only large pond complex in our area where they can seek refuge from hunters.

Beardslee, C.S., and H.D. Mitchell. 1965. *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*. Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, vol. 22.

National Weather Service. October 2003, Buffalo, New York. Suggs, David. custodian of the B. O. S. Noteworthy Records Data Base 1964 - 1997 compiled by Dean DiTommaso *et al.* Rew, Frances. Custodian of the written verification report archives.

Hamilton, Michael. Report of the 68th Annual B.O.S. October Bird Count



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	25F	4	Somerset & Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
"	26	2	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Loon	5	4	Somerset	D'Anna
"	21	1	Athol Springs	Andrle
"	25	300	Somerset & Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
"	26	55	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Horned Grebe	19	2	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	UB north campus	Pawlicki
"	23	30	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
Red-necked Grebe	23; 25	1; 1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
"	25	5	Somerset & Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	18	3	Batavia WWTP	Morgante, Watson et al (BOS)
D.-crested Cormorant	6	747	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	8	705	Buffalo Harbor	Burch
"	31	311	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
American Bittern	5; 13	1; 1	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna, Potter
"	5	1	Tonawanda WMA	Potter, D'Anna
Great Blue Heron	31	3	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson
Great Egret	6	2	Beaver I. SP	Hess
"	18	5	Iroquois NWR	Morgante, Watson
Black-cr. Night-Heron	8; 16	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	21	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Turkey Vulture	1	11	Frewsburg	DeFrancisco
"	16	3	Brooks	Hume
Snow Goose	20F; 23	5; 5	E. Aurora	Holmes
* Canada Goose	13	14	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna, Potter
<u>B.c. hutchinsii</u>				
"	18	14	Iroquois NWR	Morgante, Watson et al (BOS)
Brant	23F	132	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
Gadwall	19	34	Tifft NP	Watson
American Wigeon	5	100	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna, Potter
"	18	14	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Morgante (BOS)
American Black Duck	25	8	Farmersville	DeSha
"	18	44	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Morgante (BOS)
Northern Shoveler	18	89	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Morgante (BOS)
Northern Pintail	5	50	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna, Potter
"	18	33	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Morgante (BOS)
Green-winged Teal	5	200	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna, Potter
"	19	80	Tifft NP	Watson
Canvasback	19F	7	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
Redhead	19	2	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	31	83	Mayville	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	18	48	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Morgante (BOS)
"	19	2	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
"	26	30	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Watson
Greater Scaup	18	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante, Watson (BOS)
"	18	100	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	D'Anna
Lesser Scaup	5F	4	Somerset	D'Anna
"	18	62	Batavia WWTP	Morgante, Watson (BOS)
Surf Scoter	18F	7	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	D'Anna
"	25	1	Yates	D'Anna (BOS)
"	26	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna, Watson
White-winged Scoter	5	8	Somerset	D'Anna
Black Scoter	18F	1	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	D'Anna
"	23	12	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
"	30	2	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
Long-tailed Duck	10F	1	Lewiston Res.	D'Anna
"	23	4	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
Bufflehead	18F	15	Batavia WWTP	Morgante, Watson (BOS)
"	18F	6	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	D'Anna
Common Goldeneye	18F	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	19	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
Hooded Merganser	18	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Morgante (BOS)
Common Merganser	5F	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
"	18	19	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Morgante (BOS)
Red-br. Merganser	6F	1	Beaver I. SP	Hess
"	23	22	Long Beach	Watson
Ruddy Duck	18	<u>2241</u>	Batavia WWTP	Morgante, Watson (BOS)
"	19	18	S. Dayton	DeSha
"	19	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
"	31	36	Mayville	Watson
Osprey	5	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
Bald Eagle	16	2 ad	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	18	3 ad, 2 imm	Iroquois NWR	Morgante, Watson (BOS)
"	19	9	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-shouldered Hawk	5	1	Bush Hill SF	Yoerg, Henderson
Rough-legged Hawk	25F	1	Ivory	DeFrancisco
"	28	1	Sherman	DeFrancisco
Merlin	2	1	Goat I.	Potter
"	3	1	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	11; 15	1; 1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	22 - 30	6 records (6 max)	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	23	1	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
Peregrine Falcon	4	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	7	1	Times Beach NP	Landau, Andrle
"	8	1	Buffalo	Burch
American Coot	31	210	Mayville	Watson
Black-bellied Plover	16	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Andrle, Watson
"	18	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	23	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Semipalmated Plover	23L	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Greater Yellowlegs	8 - 30	8 records (12 max)	BOS territory	Several observers
Lesser Yellowlegs	18	3	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	18	1	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna
"	19	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	26	2	Somerset	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Spotted Sandpiper	15	1	UB north campus	Pawlicki
Sanderling	5	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Yoerg
"	8	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Andrle, Watson
"	18	4	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna
Least Sandpiper	4	1	Goat I.	D'Anna
Pectoral Sandpiper	18	2	Batavia WWTP	Morgante, Watson (BOS)
"	19L	2	Randolph	DeSha
Dunlin	18	8	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	23	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Andrle, Bogacki
Common Snipe	18	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	19	6	Randolph	DeSha
<u>Parasitic Jaeger</u>	21	1	Athol Springs	Andrle
Little Gull	26	1	Devil's Hole SP	D'Anna, Watson
Long-eared Owl	18	1	Rock Pt. PP	Potter
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	6 - 30	15 banded	Wethersfield	D & S Junkin
Common Nighthawk	5; 11	1; 2	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	8	10	Eggertsville	Morgante
"	9	3	Reinstein NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	10L	25	Hamburg	Andrle
Eastern Wood-Pewee	2; 4	2; 2	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	4L	1; 1	Goat I.; Ft. Niagara SP	D'Anna, Potter
Northern Shrike	18F	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Blue-headed Vireo	4	1	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	4	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Philadelphia Vireo	5	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
"	10L	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Red-eyed Vireo	<u>30L</u>	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Andrle, Bogacki
Common Raven	5	1	Ashford	Morgante
"	13; 28	1; 2	Ward; Alfred	Brooks
"	19	4	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	1	<u>Java</u>	D & S Junkin
Bank Swallow	<u>4L</u>	1	Goat I.	D'Anna
Tufted Titmouse	12; 20	1; 1	Alfred	Brooks
"	24	4	Tonawanda	Watson
Carolina Wren	3	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle
"	10	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	13	1	Beaver I. SP	Hess
"	31	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Andrle, Bogacki
Winter Wren	3	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle
"	4	1	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	5	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
"	24	1	Tonawanda	Watson
"	30	2	Ward	Brooks
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	2; 4	1; 10	Amherst	Pawlicki
Swainson's Thrush	10	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Hermit Thrush	23	1	E. Aurora	Holmes



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	24	4	Tonawanda	Watson
Gray Catbird	20	1	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	25	1	Golden Hill SP	D'Anna (BOS)
"	30	1	Times Beach NP	Hess
American Pipit	4	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	26	40	Porter	D'Anna, Watson
"	26	1	Yates	Yoerg, Henderson
Tennessee Warbler	4	1	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	5L	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
"	5L	1	Bush Hill SF	Yoerg, Henderson
Orange-cr. Warbler	4	2	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	4	2; 1	Amherst; Stockton	Pawlicki
"	6; 9	1; 1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	21L	1	Tonawanda	Watson
Nashville Warbler	3	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	4	5	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	6	2	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	10	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Northern Parula	<u>25; 28L</u>	1; 1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	<u>29</u>	1	Tifft NP	Landau
Magnolia Warbler	5	1	Bush Hill SF	Yoerg, Henderson
Cape May Warbler	4	2	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	5	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	5	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
"	6	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	5	3	Bush Hill SF	Yoerg, Henderson
"	6	2	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	19L	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Palm Warbler	4	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Bay-breasted Warbler	5	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
Blackpoll Warbler	2	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	4	1	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter
"	4	2	Ft. Niagara SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	19	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Black-and-white Warb.	2	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	5	2	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
Amer. Tree Sparrow	23F	2	Somerset	D'Anna, Potter
"	24	1	Tonawanda	Watson
* <u>Nelson's Sh.-t. Spar.</u>	6	1	Amherst	Pawlicki, Watson et al
"	7	1	Amherst	D'Anna, Potter et al
"	8,10	1	Amherst	Rising
"	9	2	Amherst	Pawlicki, Morgante et al
"	9	1	Amherst	Lazarczyk
"	10	2	Amherst	Pawlicki et al
Fox Sparrow	20	3	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	24	16	Tonawanda	Watson
"	26	1	Buffalo	Yoerg, Henderson
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle
"	18L	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Swamp Sparrow	5	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
"	17; 28	1; 1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
White-cr. Sparrow	4 - 24	7 records	Several locations, WNY	Several observers
Dark-eyed Junco	4F	2	Goat I.	D'Anna, Potter



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
“	4F	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Lapland Longspur	26F	14	Porter	D’Anna, Watson
Snow Bunting	23F	3	Shadigee	Potter, D’Anna
“	25	35	Somerset	D’Anna (BOS)
“	25	1	Machias	DeSha
“	26	8	Wilson Harbor	Watson, D’Anna
Rose-br. Grosbeak	5L	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Labato
Eastern Meadowlark	11; 20	14; 1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Rusty Blackbird	4F	10	Amherst	Pawlicki
“	9	3	Amherst	Morgante
“	24	2	Tonawanda	Watson
Brown-headed Cowbird	23	350	Wainfleet	Watson
* Pine Siskin	23F	1	Golden Hill SP	D’Anna, Potter
“	25	1	Somerset	Potter

Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded: 272

Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue: 3

Total for the year 2003: 275

**Statisticians’ Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## B.O.S. Field Trip to Batavia WWTP and Iroquois NWR – 10/18/03

by Mike Morgante

Ten birders showed up for the B.O.S. field trip to Batavia Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) on October 18, 2003.

Ducks were plentiful at Batavia WWTP. As we gathered in the parking lot we heard the duck hunters doing their thing on the surrounding property. There were no ducks on the aeration ponds, but we had great looks at 8 Dunlin as they flew in and then circled the ponds repeatedly. Since I was trip leader, I left the counting to Bill Watson. Ruddy Ducks were more numerous than usual, with a whopping 2,241 counted by Bill! Bill counted 1700 on one lagoon alone. Three Eared Grebes were still present. There were numerous dabblers (in descending order by my estimate): Mallard, Pintail, Black, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, and Gadwall. Divers were represented by: Ruddy, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Greater Scaup (1 seen in flight with rest of ~50 Lessers), Bufflehead (~15), Common Goldeneye (1), Hooded Merganser (1), Red-breasted Merganser (1), Common Merganser (~25). Other shorebirds included: Black-bellied Plover (1), Pectoral Sandpiper (2), and Greater Yellowlegs (1-2). Flyovers were limited to just a few Horned Larks. Yellow-rumped Warblers, White-

crowned Sparrow, RC Kinglet, and Brown Creeper were also observed at the WWTP.

We made it to Iroquois NWR around 12:30. At Mallard Overlook, I quickly found a group of 14 Richardson's Canada Geese (*B.c hutchinsii*) among the larger Canadas. I was happy to point out these smaller, paler birds to the group, especially since I was usually alone when I found them in past autumns at this same location. Other birds present included all the dabbler species seen at Batavia WWTP plus more Ring-necked Ducks, 8 Double-crested Cormorants, and 2 Wilson's Snipe. We had two immature and one adult Bald Eagle fly over as we were about to depart.

At Center Marsh on Sour Springs Road, we had 12 Greater Yellowlegs, 4-5 Great Egrets, and numerous Hooded and Common Mergansers.

A quick stop at Cayuga Pool, where open water was not visible, resulted in another adult Bald Eagle and a great look at a Northern Shrike that I initially spotted as it hovered next to the parking area.

We drove to the northern end of Feeder Road after that. Many sparrows were seen near the gate: including: White-crowned, White-throated, Swamp, Song, Lincoln's (1), Field (1), and Fox (1), a Dark-eyed Junco, plus many Rusty Blackbirds, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Brown Creepers. Two adult Bald Eagles (we had either 5-6 on the day) and 3 Lesser Yellowlegs flew over at this location.



# Report of the 68th Annual B.O.S. October Bird Count

Date: October 12, 2003

Compiler: Mike Hamilton

Weather Synopsis: Terry Yonker

## Weather Synopsis

On the morning of the count a low pressure area was located north of the area with a weak cold front trailing south. The cold front advanced through the count area from west to east during the morning, passing Buffalo-Niagara International Airport just after noon. Some sections of the count experienced mist or light rain accompanying the front. Winds shifted from the south to southwest gusting briefly with the passage of the front and settling to calm by nightfall. Most sections experienced weather very similar to that of the October 2002 count with moderate temperatures and partly to mostly sunny skies prior to and following passage of a midday front.

### Buffalo-Niagara International Airport

Sunrise: 7:24 AM

Sunset: 6:38 PM

TIME	WEATHER	TEMP	DEW PT	PRESSURE	DIR/WIND	REMARKS
Midnight	Clear	59	48	30.01	SE9	
3:00 AM	Clear	54	47	29.97	S7	
6:00 AM	Clear	51	46	29.91	S5	
9:00 AM	Partly Sunny	61	49	29.89	S12	
Noon	Mist Mostly Cldy	65	55	29.86	SW13	Weak Cold Front
3:00 PM	Partly Sunny	62	54	29.87	W8	
6:00 PM	Mostly Sunny	60	54	29.91	SW15	
9:00 PM	Clear	54	42	29.96	W7	
Midnight	Mainly Clear	48	43	29.99	Calm	

**Compilation:** The following is a list of species recorded on the count together with the number of individuals tabulated. Bold face names indicate species for which acceptable written verifications were received. **F** represents first and **L** last dates for the fall migration, \* first date for the year. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers are given in parentheses ( ).

L O O N S - D U C K S					
Common Loon	11		Blue-winged Teal	9	
Pied-billed Grebe	94		Northern Shoveler	212	(13,23)
Horned Grebe	5	(4,6)	Northern Pintail	13	
<b>Eared Grebe</b>	3	(13)	Green-winged Teal	266	
Double-crested Cormorant	2007		Canvasback	F 1	(20)
Great Blue Heron	106		Redhead	F 9	(6,7)
Great Egret	8	(5,11,13)	Ring-necked Duck	431	
Green Heron	5		Greater Scaup	1377	
Blk.-crowned Night-Heron	2	(9,11)	Lesser Scaup	56	(6,21)
Turkey Vulture	261		unspecified scaup	18	(6,7)
Snow Goose	2	(22)	Surf Scoter	150	(8)
Canada Goose	15,960		White-winged Scoter	63	(3,4,7)
Mute Swan (adults)	29		unspecified scoters	3	(4)
Wood Duck	272		Hooded Merganser	10	
Gadwall	57		Common Merganser	262	
American Wigeon	276		Red-breasted Merganser	134	
American Black Duck	94		Ruddy Duck	822	
Mallard	3,763				

O S P R E Y S - C R A N E S					
Osprey	L 4		Red-shouldered Hawk	4	(19,20)
Bald Eagle	10		Red-tailed Hawk	145	
Northern Harrier	56		American Kestrel	53	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	27		Merlin	6	(3,11,19)
Cooper's Hawk	19		Peregrine Falcon	2	(7,8)
unspecified accipiters	2	(3)	Ring-necked Pheasant	16	



Ruffed Grouse	9
Wild Turkey	224
Common Moorhen	2 (7)

American Coot	296
<b>Sandhill Crane</b>	1 (10)

#### PLOVERS - TERNS

Black-bellied Plover	4 (7)
Killdeer	477
Greater Yellowlegs	34
Lesser Yellowlegs	19
Spotted Sandpiper	5
Sanderling	3 (11)
Semipalmated Sandpiper	1 (2)
Least Sandpiper L	1 (2)
Pectoral Sandpiper	8 (2,12,16)
Dunlin	11 (6,11,23)

Wilson's Snipe	25
American Woodcock	7 (19,20)
unspecified shorebirds	3 (7)
Bonaparte's Gull	261
Ring-billed Gull	11468
Herring Gull	1078
Lesser Black-backed Gull	2 (2)
Great Black-backed Gull	67
unspecified gulls	119 (2)
Common Tern	2 (11)

#### PIGEONS - SWALLOWS

Rock Pigeon	1906
Mourning Dove	2701
Eastern Screech-Owl	18
Great Horned Owl	12
Barred Owl	6 (20,25,28)
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1 (14)
Belted Kingfisher	52
Red-bellied Woodpecker	108
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	13
Downy Woodpecker	243
Hairy Woodpecker	62
Northern Flicker	164

Pileated Woodpecker	16
Eastern Wood-Pewee	1 (5)
Eastern Phoebe	44
Blue-headed Vireo L	16
Red-eyed Vireo	2 (13,14)
Blue Jay	1298
American Crow	3496
Common Raven	16 (19,24,28)
Horned Lark	88
Tree Swallow	1 (12)
N. Rough-winged Swallow	15 (5)

#### TITS - WAXWINGS

Black-capped Chickadee	1320
Tufted Titmouse	97
Red-breasted Nuthatch	107
White-breasted Nuthatch	238
Brown Creeper	36
Carolina Wren	19
House Wren	8
Winter Wren	24
Marsh Wren	1 (10)
Golden-crowned Kinglet	240
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	163
Eastern Bluebird	283

<b>Veery</b> L	1 (9)
Gray-cheeked Thrush	2 (1)
Swainson's Thrush L	4 (1,5,12)
Hermit Thrush	43
Wood Thrush	9
American Robin	1900
Gray Catbird	50
Northern Mockingbird	32
Brown Thrasher	3 (3,9,20)
European Starling	33678
American Pipit	253
Cedar Waxwing	861

#### WARBLERS - TANAGERS

Nashville Warbler L	5
Northern Parula	1 (2)
Magnolia Warbler L	8 (18,24,28)
Cape May Warbler	1 (26)
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1 (3)
Yellow-rumped Warbler	607
Blk.-throated Green Warbler	2 (3,18)

Pine Warbler	1 (4)
Palm Warbler	20
Black-and-white Warbler L	2 (3,11)
Common Yellowthroat	11
<b>Hooded Warbler</b> L	1 (20)
unspecified warblers	2 (20)
Scarlet Tanager	1 (3)



TOWHEES – HOUSE SPARROWS					
Eastern Towhee	34	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	L	2	(7,12)
Chipping Sparrow	377	Indigo Bunting		5	(14)
Field Sparrow	96	Red-winged Blackbird		9113	
Vesper Sparrow	10	Eastern Meadowlark		58	
Savannah Sparrow	42	Rusty Blackbird		605	
Fox Sparrow	1 (9)	Common Grackle		5098	
Song Sparrow	659	Brown-headed Cowbird		1806	
Lincoln's Sparrow	5 (12,20)	Purple Finch		52	
Swamp Sparrow	113	House Finch		728	
White-throated Sparrow	2599	American Goldfinch		1119	
White-crowned Sparrow	787	House Sparrow		1961	
Dark-eyed Junco	640	unspecified birds		48	(20)
unspecified sparrows	10 (12,13,20)				

**Summary Information** – Total Species Observed ..... **152**  
Total Individual Birds Observed ... **117,872**

**Comparisons** – Associated charts, available from Michael Hamilton, give comparative summary information for the most recent decade, for the full 68 counts and decade by decade since 1935. A chart listing totals for each species per section for 2002 is also available. In addition the following notes are added:

NOTES:**Highest count since 1935 (x the average):** Mute Swan, 29 (142.5 x); Surf Scoter, 150 (12.5 x); Common Merganser, 262 (8 x); Bald Eagle, 10 (5 x); Merlin, 6 (6 x); Lesser Black-backed Gull, 2 (?x); Eastern Screech-Owl, 18 (3.6 x); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 108 (10.8 x).  
**Highest count in past decade (x the average):** Mute Swan, 29 (4.8 x); Ring-necked Duck, 431 (2 x); Surf Scoter, 150 (14 x); Red-breasted Merganser, 134 (2.5 x); Bald Eagle, 10 (2.5); Merlin, 6 (3 x); Spotted Sandpiper, 5 (2.5 x); Lesser Black-backed Gull, 2 (2 x); Eastern Screech-Owl, 18 (2.3 x); Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 1 (? x); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 108 (2.5 x); Hairy Woodpecker, 62 (1.4 x); Carolina Wren, 19 (2 x); House Wren, 8 (1.3 x); Veery,2 (? X); Wood Thrush, 9 (4.5 x); Scarlet Tanager, 1 (? X).  
**Near lowest count since 1935 (% of the average):** Ruffed Grouse, 9 (4%) – lowest was 8 in 2002  
**Lowest count in past decade (% of the average):** Black-crowned Night-Heron, 2 (33%); Northern Pintail, 13 (26%); Tree Swallow, 1 (<1%).  
**Second count record:** Eared Grebe, 3 – first record was 2 in '97; Sandhill Crane, 1- first record was 2 in '86.  
**First decade record:** Sandhill Crane, 1.  
**Second decade record:** Eared Grebe, 3 – first record was 2 in '97; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 1 – first record was 1 in '99; Veery, 2 – first record was 1 in '96; Scarlet Tanager, 1 – first record was 1 in '01.  
**Third decade record:** Red-throated Loon,1 – previous record was 1 each in '96 & '00; Indigo Bunting, 5 – previous record was 1 each in '94 & '00.

**Sections and Observers:** Names of section compilers are in boldface.

1. Fonthill, ON: **Lynne Landon**, Terry Yonker
2. Thorold, ON: Brian Ahara, Gordon Bellerby, Marcie Jacklin, **Kayo Roy**, Tim Seburn, Maggie Smiley, Katherine Stoltz
3. Wilson, NY: Bill Broderick, **Willie D'Anna**, Betsy Potter, Vicki Rothman
4. Middleport, NY: Michelle Coblentz, Julie Eberhart, Barbara Henderson, Donald House, Marie Johnson, Gerald Lazarczyk, Alice McKale, **Bill Watson**, Peter Yoerg
5. Oak Orchard, NY: Don Brasure, Bill Burch, Robert Lipp, Susan O'Donnell, **Tom O'Donnell**
6. Port Maitland, ON: **Brad Clements**, Chauncey Wood, Sarah Wood
7. Lowbanks, ON: Barbara Byron, Richard Byron, Brad Clements, Edward Fuchs, **Mike Hamilton**, Jack Mansfield, Sonja Mansfield
8. Fort Erie, ON: Doug Happ, Brian Lewandowski, **Mike Zebehazy**
9. Grand Island, NY: Mandy Dragoo, Mike Galas, Sylvia Galas, Ron Hacker, Sue Hacker, Tammy Kelly, Eric Lobato, Debra Milleville, Susan M. O'Donnell, Thomas M. O'Donnell, James Pawlicki, **Gerry Rising**, Nick Sly



9. Grand Island, NY: Mandy Dragoo, Mike Galas, Sylvia Galas, Ron Hacker, Sue Hacker, Tammy Kelly, Eric Lobato, Debra Milleville, Susan M. O'Donnell, Thomas M. O'Donnell, James Pawlicki, **Gerry Rising**, Nick Sly
10. Akron, NY: Edward Crohn, Donna Deleon, Robert Deleon, **Donald Roberson**, Mary Ann Stegmeier, John Welte, Martha Welte
11. Buffalo, NY: **Alec Humann**, Molly Maghran, Nancy Vigyikan, Peter Yoerg, Tom Zulawski
12. Lancaster, NY: Ann Bauer, Marion Bee, Kurt Fox, Paul Fuhrmann, Bobbie Fuhrmann, Linda Holmes, Jackie Isgro, Mahlon Miller, **Mike Morgante**, Marlene Phillips, Gail Seamans, Donna Wieand
13. Batavia, NY: Douglas Beattie, Carol Britton, Elaine Dart, Tad Gerace, Eileen Hull, Robert Hull, Aron Kehlenbeck, Zeke Kehlenbeck, **Jane Mason**, Marc Mason, **Max Mason**, Gail Seamans
14. Hamburg, NY: Ken Brandes, Joanne Dobler, Tim Goff, Fred Harrington, Erma Kern, Glenna Leous, Pat Madigan, **Barbara Walker**, Margaret Wooley, Audrey Zegabarth
15. Java, NY: **Bill Bogacki**, Dennis Russell
16. Angola, NY: Robert Andrie, Thomas Connare, Audrey Horbett, Sharon Krawczyk, **Frances Rew**, Joseph Thill
17. Cattaraugus, NY: John Filor, **Robert Wagner**
18. Delavan, NY: **Bruce Chilton**, Michael Desha, James Landau, Karen Landau
19. Fillmore, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Ron Andrews, Linda Cash, , Faye Clancy, Carolyn Colombara, Barbara Cronk, Lyle Hotchkiss, Dora Lilly, Louise Mills, Joan Nacervan, Roger Nicholson, Michael Raybuck, Theresa Rork, **Elaine Smith**, , Marion Smith, Max Smith, James Talbott, Ann Voss, Jay Wilson, Jean Wilson, **Larry Wilson**, Richard Wilson, Roseanna Wilson
20. Dunkirk, NY: Lake Erie Bird Club: Karen Brisley, Ken Brisley, Chris Budniewski, Ray Budniewski, Dick Clark, Sylvia Clark, Joyce Cullen, **Paul Farver**, Joanne Goetz, Tom Goetz, Joe Gula, Carol Hardenburg, Peg Langer, Terry Mahoney, Richrd Miga, Terry Mosher, Lucille Neveau, Bob Peterson, Beverly Ruska, John Ruska, Audrey Schafer
21. Cherry Creek, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jessie Nelson, Joanne Nelson, **Bob Sundell**
22. Sherman, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Ann Beebe, Jim Berry, Ranjit Laha, Linda O'Brien, **Bob Sundell**
23. Frewsburg, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jean Pigman, Tom Simmons, **Bob Sundell**
24. Salamanca, NY and Allegany State Park: Cattaraugus County Bird Club: **Tim Baird**
25. Allegany, NY: Cattaraugus County Bird Club: **Tim Baird**, Mike Desha, Stephen W. Eaton
26. Cuba, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: **Doris Burton**, Mary Jordan, Bob Smalley, Bruce Smalley, Denton Willett
27. Bolivar, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Dan Babcock, Harold Babcock, **Doris Burton**, Norman Ives, Helen Link
28. Alfred, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Russell Allen, Ellen Baker, Carol Behn, Wayne Brewster, Don Brink, Lorna Brink, **Betsy Brooks**, Doris Burton, Mary Lou Cartledge, **Diane Converso**, Jim Copenheaver, Pauletta Copenheaver, Paul Culley, Ann Eisenhardt, Jamie Eisenhardt, Peg Eisenhardt, Peter Finlay, Terry Finlay, John Gradoni, Peter Gradoni, Geri Hills, Ralph Hills, Betty Kellog, Wayne Kellog, Clarence Klingensmith, Barry Lash, Martha Lash, Cathy MacDonald, Ken McClure, Marion McClure, Mary Ormsby, Sean Phelan, Ann Pipal, Bob Pipal, Vivian Pitzrick, Evelyn Ramsey, Laurie Rygiel, Jim Smith, Maureen Soule, Terah Soule, Connor Stevens, Bruce Taggart, Wilma Taggart, Wilma L. Taggart, Abbey Timbrook, Tim Timbrook, Mary Lu Wells, **Suzanne Wood**

**Total Number of Observers: 229**



# Buffalo Ornithological Society Annual Treasurer's Report, 2002-2003

Thomas O'Donnell, Treasurer

**Checking account – opening balance:** **\$ 8,372.40\*\***

**Distributed:	General Fund	\$ 6,882.29
	(General Operating Exp.	\$ 3,279.25
	(Peregrine Project	\$ 94.20
	(2004 Banquet	\$ 900.00
	(Map Project	\$ 593.02
	(M.L. Emerson Bequest	\$ 2,015.82
	<i>Prothonotary</i> Fund	\$ 1,033.81
	Special Projects Fund	\$ 431.30
	Donation in memory of Art Schaffner	\$ 25.00

## Income:

Dues: General Fund	\$ 1015.00
<i>Prothonotary</i> Fund	\$ 2730.00
Donations	\$ 495.00
Checking account interest	\$ 19.88
Seasonal Checklist Sales	\$ 648.00
Axtell/McVey/Wendling Donation	\$ 130.00
BP Foundation matching gift (C. McMurty)	\$ 25.00
Transfer from Inv. Acct. for special projects	\$ 3335.20

**Total Income** **\$8398.08**

## Expense:

Annual bulk mail fee	\$ 150.00
Bulk Postage Account	\$ 300.00
<i>Prothonotary</i> printing	\$2309.91
<i>Prothonotary</i> postage & supplies	\$ 218.06
Membership committee	\$ 83.67
Grand Island property tax	\$ 163.88
Statistician expenses	\$ 70.45
April Count expenses	\$ 30.71
October Count expenses	\$ 24.95
Treasurer expenses	\$ 144.90
Internet Domain registration (2 years)	\$ 70.00
Seasonal Checklist printing & expenses	\$ 897.99
Section Map printing & postage	\$ 411.32
Speaker Honorarium	\$ 75.00
Bank Service Charges	\$ 35.68
FNYSBC dues	\$ 30.00
Museum of Science meeting room	\$ 300.00
Special Project Fund grants & expenses	\$ 3766.50
Transfer A/M/W donations to inv. Acct.	\$ 130.00

**Total Expense** **\$9213.02**

Transfer of \$300.00 to 2004 Banquet

**Checking account – closing balance** **\$ 7,557.46\*\***

**Distributed:	General Fund	\$ 6,746.62
	(General Operating Exp.	\$ 3,254.90
	(Peregrine Project	\$ 94.20
	(2004 Banquet	\$ 1,200.00
	(Map Project	\$ 181.70
	(M.L. Emerson Bequest	\$ 2,015.82
	<i>Prothonotary</i> Fund	\$ 785.84
	Donation in memory of Art Schaffner	\$ 25.00

**Axtell/McVey/Wendling Fund value as of 10/6/03** **\$44,712.80**



# ACTUAL & PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR THE YEARS 2002 - 2005 FOR THE BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

*Submitted by the Budget Committee: Thomas O'Donnell, Lynne Landon, Terry Yonker, Gerry Rising, Mike Hamilton (11/12/03)*

Following is the actual budget for the BOS fiscal year 2002-2003 and the proposed budgets for 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. Although the Society must vote on the 2003-2004 budget **only**, it is helpful to anticipate future needs and/or the spreading of expenses over more than one year. To this end the 2004-2005 preliminary budget is included as a guide only and will need to be revised and voted on next year.

## INCOME:

	<u>2002-2003</u>		<u>2003-2004</u>	<u>2004-2005</u>
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>P. Budget</u>	<u>P. Budget</u>
Opening Balance:	5900.00	5900.28	4316.64	1786.64
2002-2003 Dues:	3900.00	3745.00	3800.00	3800.00
Date Guide Sales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Membership Premiums	800.00	495.00	500.00	500.00
Misc. Income	-	44.88	20.00	20.00
Seasonal Checklist Sales	-	648.00	150.00	100.00
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>10600.00</b>	<b>10833.16</b>	<b>8786.64</b>	<b>6206.64</b>

## EXPENSE:

General operating expensens	1000.00	654.24	1000.00	1000.00
Contributions	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
Speakers Fund (reimbursable expense for travel, lodging)	300.00	75.00	100.00	100.00
Vaughn Lecture Series (support)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
Prothonotary	3000.00	2977.97	3000.00	3000.00
Meeting Room contribution to Science Museum	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00
2004 Banquet Fund (reserved)	1200.00	1200.00	1500.00	300.00
R. Exp. for Delegates to An'l Meeting of NYS Ornithological Soc.	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Young People's Weekend	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
BOS Graphics Coordination and Update	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00
SectionMap Project	600.00	411.32	400.00	0.00
BOS Seasonal Checklist	800.00	897.99	0.00	0.00
Beardslee & Mitchell update (support for reimbursable expense)	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total expense:</b>	<b>8300.00</b>	<b>6516.52</b>	<b>7000.00</b>	<b>5100.00</b>

<b>Ending bank balance (general operating contingency):</b>	<b>2300.00</b>	<b>4316.64</b>	<b>1786.64</b>	<b>1106.64</b>
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## January – March Calendar

BOS website

<http://www.bosbirding.org/>

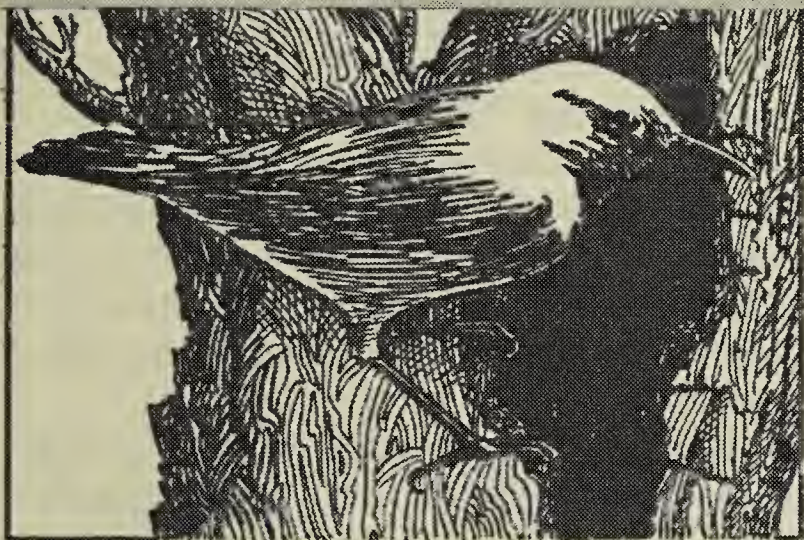


Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

- January 1: Thursday. Dunkirk-Fredonia CBC.** Compiler: Joanne Goetz (goetz@netsync.net or 716-673-1627) and Paul Farver 716-792-9042
- January 4: Sunday. Hamburg-East Aurora CBC.** Compiler: Mike Zebeha (662-6987 or zebs@adelphia.net)
- January 4: Sunday. Port Colborne Christmas Bird Count.** We start by meeting at McDonald's restaurant, at the corner of Highway 3 and Highway 58 at 8 AM to organize. Compiler: Drew Campbell (drew.campbell@gm.com or voice mail at 1-800-539-2329)
- January 11: Sunday. Waterfowl Count of the New York State Ornithological Association.** This is the target date, any date between Jan 10-18 inclusive is acceptable. The best count of shifting flocks is attained if everyone uses the target date, weather permitting. Bill Burch (716-773-3690).
- January 14: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Michael R. Morgan will discuss Evaluation of a Reproductive Index for Grassland Breeding Birds at Iroquois NWR.
- January 28: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM.** Mike Hamilton will discuss the 2002 October Count in an Historical Perspective, and Bob DeLeon will present the 2003 May Count in a Historical Context.
- February 11: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Mark Kandel of the NYSDEC will discuss Colonial Waterbird Management on Strawberry and Motor Islands.
- February 25: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Paul Hess, Wildlife Biologist of Iroquois NWR, will discuss: The Ecology of Arctic Nesting Geese.
- March 7: Sunday. Niagara County, New York Owl Trip.** Meet at 1:00 PM near the Toys R Us entrance at the Summit Park Mall on Williams Road just south of Niagara Falls Blvd. in the Town of Wheatfield. Leader: Chuck Rosenberg (434-9403, rosestod@localnet.com, cell phone: 622-3278)
- March 1 - May 10: Hamburg Hawkwatch at Lakeside Memorial Park in Hamburg** (off Camp Rd. bet. Routes 5 & 20). Generally 10 AM - 3 PM weather permitting. Jim Landau (941-3869 or kjlandau@localnet.com).



# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 69, No. 12 December, 2003

### THE MONTH: November

*by Gerry Rising*

According to Mclaughlin and O'Hara of the National Weather Service Buffalo Office, November 2003 was mild with near normal rainfall, limited sunshine and minimal snowfall. The data confirm this: Average temperature 43 °F, almost three degrees above normal with just one cold spell from the 6th through the 10th and a record high of 70 °F on the 23rd. Precipitation 4 inches, less than a fifth inch above normal. Percentage of possible sunshine 31% (at least better than last year's gloomy 21%). Snowfall total 4 inches, almost 7 inches below normal. As the weathermen summarize: "Not bad as Novembers go."

Despite the lack of exciting weather, the month's birding was quite interesting. There were, for example, four unusually high waterfowl counts: 835 Ruddy Ducks at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) on the 9th, 10,000 Buffleheads at Fort Erie on the 15th, 68 Hooded Mergansers at Times Beach on the 21st and 1082 westward-flying Red-throated Loons at Lakeside Beach on the 30th.

There were even inland records of Red-throated Loons: one at Batavia WWTP on the 30th and one (unconfirmed) at Sinking Ponds on 16-17. The now regular Eared Grebes, two this year, appeared at Batavia WWTP on the 9th.

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*by Gerry Rising*
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D'Anna's Ross's Goose record at Lowbanks, Ontario on the 23rd is accompanied with a clear photo.

Yoerg (26th) and Watson (28th) separately reported a Willet on the Bird Island Pier.

I particularly call attention to Fox's lake watches: three hours at Golden Hills State Park produced 2500 waterfowl on the 24th and six hours at Lakeside State Park another 3360 on the 30th.

Yoerg's usual report of the Merlins on the Main Street University at Buffalo campus, 7-8 birds in the Austrian pines this year, is accompanied by these comments: "A couple weeks ago I spoke with Lou Gardella, a birder who is monitoring a similar situation in a Cleveland area cemetery. (maximum of 4 birds last winter). He also mentioned another roost of 4-5 birds for the past five years in the small town of Bath 15-20 miles south of Cleveland. It seems a good possibility that many such roosts exist wherever wintering Merlins are found.

Among Brooks' banding records is one Blue Jay recapture establishing that it was in its 12th year. The Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow in Amherst stayed until the 1st.



The Ross's Goose was photographed at Lowbanks, Ontario on Nov. 23, 2003. Photograph courtesy of Willie D'Anna.



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Eileen Hull

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V. President: Lynne Landon  
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2003-2004 Morgan Jones  
Michael Davis  
Alice McHale  
2004-2005 Mike Hamilton  
Tom LeBlanc  
Mike Morgante  
2005-2006 Bob DeLeon  
Mike Desha  
Jim Landau

As to winter birds: There were nine Rough-legged Hawk reports (max 4); a number of Purple Sandpipers (max 3) appeared at various locations; Little, California and Iceland Gulls appeared as did a few Short-eared and Saw-whet Owls. (Junkin banded four saw-whets.) Four Northern Shrikes were recorded. Good flocks of Lapland Longspurs (25 max) and Snow Buntings (two flocks of 200 each on the 22nd) appeared. And even a few winter finches showed up: Common Redpoll (one flock of 75), Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak were all recorded, the latter two species in smaller numbers.

harbor. The herons were not refound, but we again saw the Peregrine soaring over and around the former Cargill elevator near the south end of the harbor. As we watched, we saw a second Peregrine; and both birds were observed actively diving, soaring and pursuing each other as they flew around the elevator. Occasionally, one perched on a window frame in which the glass was missing or on one of the devices attached to the flagpole on the top of the building. One bird was noticeably larger than the other and no leg bands could be seen owing to the distance and positions of the birds.

At one point one of the falcons dove at a gull on the water, which left the area hastily. What was initially thought to be a third Peregrine in the air coming from the north turned out to be a Northern Harrier. It was quickly attacked by both falcons, one climbing from near water level right after the other had just swooped at it from above. When at close range with them the harrier was seen to turn upside down and extend its legs and talons. The harrier soon beat a hasty retreat to the north over the Small Boat Harbor. The falcons again perched at times in the upper windows of the elevator, and also soared and dived, taking advantage of the air currents created by the mild but fresh southwest wind which interacted with the birds and numerous open windows of the tall elevator.

Then, shortly after this, a Canada Goose flew over the harbor higher, but on relatively the same flight path taken by the herons and received the same treatment – it suddenly found a Peregrine Falcon closing in on its tail and began to maneuver and honk in attempting to elude the peregrine. The Peregrine broke off pursuit as both birds disappeared behind the elevator. The ruffled goose continued on its course to the southwest.

Again the falcons soared and swooped after each other about the elevator, as we moved the car to an observation point in a parking area south of the building and continued to watch their gyrations. At this point a Red-tailed Hawk flew from across Route 5 into harms way and was also set upon by both falcons. It finally took refuge on the south side of the St. Lawrence Cement Plant on the outside metal stairway of one of their buildings. The falcons returned to the elevator and we left the area. During all this harrying, the smaller bird appeared to take the initiative first, at least most of the time.

All these observations took place in approximately 20-30 minutes. None of these hapless birds were apparently struck by the Peregrines but rather were pursued, dove upon and otherwise harried by the fal-

## PEREGRINE FALCONS HARASS BIRDS IN SOUTH BUFFALO HARBOR

*by Robert F. Andrie, James R. Landau  
and William J. Bogacki*

On the largely sunny day of December 16<sup>th</sup>, as Jim Landau, Bill Bogacki and I drove out the Tifft Nature Preserve road from the Nature Center toward the parking lot, Jim spotted a Great Blue Heron flying ahead of us toward the harbor. Then we saw another heron flying toward the lake farther to the south. About that time a Peregrine Falcon was seen diving at the first heron and both birds dropped below the elevated roadway.

We waited a moment to see if either would appear again and drove under Route 5 to try and pick up the birds, parking in the lot by Gallagher Beach on the



cons. Interestingly a number of scaup, mallard and sundry other waterfowl were in the vicinity and, while wary, did not leave the area.

These falcons appeared to be in immature plumage and obviously were not hunting but were engaged in the kind of exercise and “play” in which they are known to engage frequently. *Brown and Amadon* (1968) said “in the wild state, however, they have been recorded as making ten to twelve false attacks for every successful kill. Some supposed stoops at prey may only be play, and if in earnest, the falcon may have a higher percentage of success. They also spend many hours each day circling above their chosen haunts, and at such times are clearly not hunting, since they often soar after feeding. The pair are very attached to one another’s company. And are usually seen together or not far apart. . . The perfect skill of this species in flight is always a joy to watch. A Peregrine is hardly ever seen off balance or taken aback, even in violent wind, while they are capable of hair-breadth accuracy at great speed when stooping either in play or to kill . . . they were formerly flown at herons.”

*Bent* (1938) said “So wonderful are the aerial evolutions of these peregrines during this (breeding) season that I am inclined to think that no observer can fully appreciate their powers of flight who has not seen them at the nesting site on a windy March day. These falcons often indulge in playful flight for exercise or sport. Dalos E. Culver (1919), writing of two that were playing about the tower of the Philadelphia City Hall, says ‘When first observed they were engaged in aerial evolutions apparently purely for the joy of flying, now rapidly, now slowly, now chasing one another and then a rapid swoop to one of the lower ledges, the leading bird alighting and the other wheeling about the tower or out into mid air. These evolutions were continued until dusk. \*\*\* Often they were seen to fly directly toward one another with a very rapid flapping of the wings but in a labored manner so that they made very slow progress, and then when almost breast to breast they would turn suddenly and dive down vertically.’ Dr. Wetmore (1933) writes: ‘When not hungry, the duck hawk, feeling its superior strength, frequently indulges in harmless play at the expense of its bird neighbors. Often I have seen them flying along the river channels, driving ahead of them a motley flock of blackbirds, herons, avocets and other birds, herding them in a disorder like sheep, but without offering to harm them. . . a duck hawk would dart at them repeatedly, forcing them down lower and lower, until finally, with protesting squawks, they

struck the water. They were not allowed to rise, but had to swim into the shelter of the willows to escape. One pleasant afternoon I heard a great roaring of wings overhead and looked up to see a cormorant that a few minutes before had been soaring peacefully high in the air, dashing down with set wings toward the river, with a duck hawk a few feet behind. Just above the water the hawk suddenly accelerated, tapped the cormorant lightly on the back, then circled easily away while the frightened quarry took refuge unharmed in the water. Frequently falcons at play dashed at top speed through milling flocks of flying sandpipers, scattering them like leaves in the wind, but not striking any of them.

This was a most fascinating and exciting experience for us to witness and one which we will remember with pleasure for a long time.

*Bent, A. C.* 1938 Life histories of North American Birds of Prey, Part 2

*Brown, L. and D. Amadon* 1968. Hawks, eagles and falcons of the world, vols. 1 & 2, McGraw-Hill Book. Co.

## RED-TAILED HAWK TAKES BONAPARTE’S GULL

by Bill Watson

You can’t see everything. On December 1, 2002 from 10:30 AM to 12:00 noon I was at Sir Adam Beck studying a first winter Iceland Gull, a third winter California Gull, and an adult? Lesser Black-backed Gull – having pink instead of yellow feet and legs. During this time most of about 20 observers failed to notice or paid little attention to the pair of Red-tailed Hawks soaring in the Niagara Gorge.

I did notice one of the Red-tailed Hawks had something white clutched in its talons. Upon closer inspection with binoculars and telescope revealed that it was carrying a Bonaparte’s Gull.

Richard Pope of Toronto informed me that a woman next to him saw the Red-tailed Hawk hit the Bonaparte’s Gull in the air, and he had observed the encounter in time to see the hapless Bonaparte’s Gull’s feathers flutter to the river.

The two Red-tails continued to circle together in a courtship display with their legs extended downward. As the Red-tailed Hawk displayed the Bonaparte’s Gull in outstretched talons far below its belly, its wide circles slowly rose upward above the waters of the Niagara Gorge. Its mate was slowly circling in similar spacious circles, but at a higher altitude.

(continue on page 140)



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	9	10	Somerset	Morgante
"	22	6	Four Mile Creek SP	Morgante
"	24	60	Golden Hill SP	Fox
"	30	1	<u>Batavia WWTP</u>	Watson
"	30	<u>1082</u>	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Common Loon	9	20	Somerset	Morgante
"	22	72	Golden Hill SP	Fox
Pied-billed Grebe	22	4	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew
"	27	1	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
Horned Grebe	9	10; 10; 1	Somerset; Yates; Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	16	50	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	2	Wilson	Morgante
"	30	318	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Red-necked Grebe	9	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	30	5	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	9	2	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
D.-crested Cormorant	9	1; 1	Olcott; Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	15	60	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	22	8	L. Ontario plain	Morgante
"	28	4	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
"	30	6	Buffalo Harbor	Morgante
Great Egret	<u>14</u>	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
Turkey Vulture	<u>30</u>	1	Niagara Falls	S & T O'Donnell
Gr. White-fr. Goose	30	4	Cheektowaga	Krawczyk
Snow Goose	1	4	E. Aurora	Holmes
<u>Ross's Goose</u>	23	1	Lowbanks, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Can. Goose ( <i>hutchinsii</i> )	9	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Brant	8; 15; 30	1; 1; 1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Tundra Swan	9	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	15	4; 28	Pt. Abino; Yacht Harbour, Ont.	Rew
"	23	300	Morgan's Pt, Ft. Erie	D'Anna et al
"	30	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Gadwall	1	86	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna
"	16	150	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23	19	Mayville	Rew
"	30	26	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
American Wigeon	9	15	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	21	14	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
American Black Duck	9	90	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	24	5	Golden Hill SP	Fox



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	30	96	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	30	13	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Mallard	9	<u>300</u>	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Northern Shoveler	9	350	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	19	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	30	196	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Northern Pintail	2	2	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky, Davis
"	9	80	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	15	8	Pt. Abino, Ont.	Rew
"	19	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	30	27	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Green-winged Teal	9	45	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	15	35	Tifft NP	Morgante
"	24	1	Golden Hill SP	Fox
"	30	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Canvasback	15	12	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	28	20	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
Redhead	24	10	Golden Hill SP	Fox
Ring-necked Duck	9	12	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	14	30	Bird I. Pier	Andrle
"	15	12	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	19	2	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	28	22	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
Greater Scaup	24	572	Golden Hill SP	Fox
"	30	10	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	30	242	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Lesser Scaup	9	25	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	30	12	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Harlequin Duck	23	1	Golden Hill SP	Fox
Surf Scoter	1	2	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	16	10	Long Beach, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	15	3	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
White-winged Scoter	15	5	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	16	4	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	396	Golden Hill SP	Fox
"	28	1	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
"	30	360	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Black Scoter	1	7	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
"	30	7	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Long-tailed Duck	9	5	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	15	450	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	24	55	Golden Hill SP	Fox
"	30	149	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Bufflehead	7	7	Alfred	Brooks
"	9	200	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	15	1450	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	15	<u>10000</u>	Ft. Erie	Rew
"	28	30	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
"	30	94	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Common Goldeneye	15	400	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	30	378	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Hooded Merganser	9	8; 20	Batavia WWTP; Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	18; 26	35; 42	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	21	68	Times Beach NP	Andrle
"	23	23	Mayville	Rew
"	30	11	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Common Merganser	3; 7	1; 1	Alfred	Brooks
"	9	10	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	30	11	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	30	10	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Red-br. Merganser	24	<u>829</u>	Golden Hill SP	Fox
"	30	217	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Ruddy Duck	9	<u>835</u>	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	30	344	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Bald Eagle	2	2	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky, Davis
"	22	1 ad	Iroquois NWR	Fox
Red-shouldered Hawk	10	1	Charlotte	Rew, Horbett
Rough-legged Hawk	9	1	Orangeville	D & S Junkin
"	10	1	Charlotte	Rew, Horbett
"	12	2	Gerry	DeFrancisco
"	15	4; 1	Gerry; Ellington	DeFrancisco
"	16	1; 2	Porter; Niag. Falls, Ont.	S & T O'Donnell
"	22	3	Charlotte	Rew
"	23	1	Pembroke	Morgante
Merlin	<u>4 - 30</u>	6 repts. (7 max)	UB south campus	Yoerg, Henderson
Peregrine Falcon	<u>15</u>	1	Pt. Abino, Ont.	Rew
"	<u>23</u>	1	Pt. Colborne, Ont.	D'Anna et al
American Coot	15	15	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	23	157; 360	Dunkirk Harbor; Mayville	Rew
"	28	11	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
Black-bellied Plover	1	2	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna
"	9	2	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Amer. Golden-Plover	9	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Greater Yellowlegs	1	3; 3	Lowbanks; Rees Bay, Ont	D'Anna, Potter ; D'Anna
"	9	3	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	16	2	Grand I.	Andrle
Lesser Yellowlegs	6	3	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Willet	<u>26</u>	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
"	<u>28</u>	1	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
Sanderling	8	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	9	2	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	16L	1; 3	Long Beach, Ont. Mohawk Pt., Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
White-r. Sandpiper	10L	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle
Purple Sandpiper	16F	2	Long Beach, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	3	Donnelly's Pier	Yoerg
"	30	2	Buffalo Harbor	Morgante
"	30	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Dunlin	3	230	Somerset	Ewald



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	6	7	Times Beach NP	Andrle
"	8	7	Goat I.	T O'Donnell
"	9	38; 12	Batavia WWTP; Somerset	Morgante
"	16	20; 101	Long Beach, Ont. Mohawk Pt., Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23	5	Ft. Erie	D'Anna et al
"	26	5	Donnelly's Pier	Yoerg
Little Gull	2	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
"	8	1	Queenston	D'Anna et al
* <u>California Gull</u>	15; 29; 30	1; 1; 1	Adam Beck Hydro, Niagara River, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Iceland Gull	8F	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	22	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Morgante
Lesser Black-b. Gull	16	1	Goat I.	Andrle
"	22	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Morgante
"	22	1	Goat I.	Morgante
"	29	1	Adam Beck Hydro, Ont.	Watson
Short-eared Owl	30	3	Porter	S & T O'Donnell
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	4; 6; 8; 10	1; 2; 1; 1 (banded)	Wethersfield	D & S Junkin
"	16	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23	3	Rock Pt. PP	Potter et al
Eastern Phoebe	1	2	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna
"	13	1	Lancaster	Morgante
Northern Shrike	2	1	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
"	6; 15	1; 1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	9	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter
"	22	1	Cambria	Morgante
Blue-headed Vireo	1L	1	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna
Common Raven	21; 22	2; 1	Alfred; Ward	Brooks
Horned Lark	2	50	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky, Davis
"	22	25	Wilson	Morgante
Carolina Wren	1 - 30	3	Falconer	DeFrancisco
"	9	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	15	1; 1	Tifft NP; Eggertsville	Morgante
"	23	1	Buffalo	Yoerg, Henderson
Winter Wren	19	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	2; 6L	1; 1	Alfred	Brooks
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	<u>1; 23L</u>	1; 1	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna et al
Northern Mockingbird	1	1	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	Lancaster	Morgante
American Pipit	9L	2	Somerset	Morgante
Yellow-r. Warbler	1	2	Jamestown	Watson (NYSFBC)
"	25	2	Lancaster	Morgante
Amer. Tree Sparrow	2	25	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky, Davis
"	6	3	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	9	5	Somerset	Morgante
Field Sparrow	1	1	Ft. Erie	D'Anna, Potter
<u>Nelson's Sh.-t. Spar.</u>	1L	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Fox Sparrow	1	1	Jamestown	Watson (NYSFBC)



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	1	2	Ft. Erie	Potter, D'Anna
"	6; 15	5; 2	Amherst	Pawlicki
White-thr. Sparrow	1	6	Jamestown	Watson (NYSFBC)
"	3; 7	1; 5	Alfred	Brooks
White-cr. Sparrow	6	25	Birdsall	Brooks
Lapland Longspur	2	2	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky, Davis
"	22	25	Wilson	Morgante
"	23	4	Bethany	Beattie
Snow Bunting	2	4	Iroquois NWR	Skalicky, Davis
"	9	120; 130	Somerset; Yates	Morgante
"	9; 15	1; 6	Batavia WWTP; Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	22	200; 200	Golden Hill SP; Wilson	Fox
"	30	70	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Red-w. Blackbird	9; 15	5; 1	Iroquois NWR; Tifft NP	Morgante
"	22; 25	3; 4	Amherst; Lancaster	Morgante
Eastern Meadowlark	1; 2	2; 2	Amherst	Pawlicki; Morgante
"	4	2	Lancaster	Morgante
Rusty Blackbird	2	5	Amherst	Morgante
"	15	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Common Grackle	3; 25	2; 2	Lancaster	Morgante
"	12	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Brown-headed Cowbird	22	12	Ransomville	Morgante
Purple Finch	1	2; 3	Rock Pt. PP; Ft. Erie	D'Anna; D'Anna, Potter
* Common Redpoll	22F	75	Lakeside Beach SP	Fox
Pine Siskin	15	6	Eggertsville	Morgante
"	29	8	Bennington	Seamans
American Goldfinch	9	<u>200</u>	Somerset	Morgante
* Evening Grosbeak	9F	1	Wethersfield	D & S Junkin
"	22	1	Golden Hill SP	Fox

Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:

275

Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded in this issue:

3

Total for the year 2003:

278

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

*(continued from Watson page 135)*

Helen Snyder writes in *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* "Some display flights are performed by a pair, as when Red-tailed Hawks circle together and chase off an intruder. After such a display, the male floats down to the female from above and behind, dangling his feet and white thighs. As he approaches, the female dangles her feet in the same way..." Although some of the described courtship behaviors were not observed, the slow circling and dangling outstretched feet and white thighs were unmistakable.

In *Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey* Arthur Cleveland Bent discusses three studies that examined the stomach contents of Red-tailed Hawks. The contents of a total of 767 stomachs were examined, and as expected, they contained mostly mice and

other mammals. Surprisingly, 141 birds were found. One has to wonder if this sample was random, or more likely, many of these "Chicken Hawks" were shot by farmers when the red-tails were raiding the chicken coop. Although falconers are quick to point out that Red-tailed Hawks as individuals are specialized hunters, preying mostly on squirrels, voles or rabbits, they are also opportunistic hunters and as a group feed on a large variety of animal species.

Previous documentation of Red-tailed Hawks preying on gulls was not found. I would expect this phenomenon may be more common than reported given the abundance of gulls on the Niagara River in late November and early December, and with most of these birds directing their attention downward at the waters surface, rather than up for overhead predators.



# **Hairy Woodpecker, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, and Orioles Enliven a Bird Feeder in Eden, New York**

*by Robert F. Andrle*

It all commenced with the appearance of the usual pair of hummingbirds on 5 May 2003, at the eight-ounce, four-flowered port feeder suspended from a wire on a branch of a large sugar maple about eight feet from the window. They have been there every year.

By late May a pair of Baltimore Orioles began nesting in a nearby tree. After removing two of the yellow flowers, they began to use the larger holes daily to drink from the feeder, thereby at times, interrupting the hummingbird feeding.

On 26 May in late afternoon, two Orchard Orioles, an immature male and an adult female began contending at the ports, both with the hummingbirds and the Baltimore Orioles. On 15 June a young Hairy Woodpecker was being fed suet from another suet feeder hanging about two feet away. In early July, this immature Hairy began to feed at the hummingbird feeder and all these individuals continued to do so, contending with the hummingbirds at the four feeder ports, two more of them having been opened by the orioles.

The interactions at the feeder by these birds provided fascinating viewing at close range. The two pairs of orioles frequently contended for feeder ports, the Baltimores most often dominated the Orchards, but now and then the Orchards would prevail; often only one of each species appeared and drove the other off the feeder. The Baltimores fed most often, so they were often dominant over the Orchards.

The immature Hairy came in to the feeder less often than the orioles, but when it did, it dominated them. The hummingbird during these times attempted to visit an empty port on the feeder by skipping from port to port and circling about the feeder. At times one or two orioles present would perch to drink on opposite sides. When the woodpecker visited, any bird at the feeder gave way to it. It was comical to see its attempts to use the little cross perches at each port, sometimes feeding while hanging nearly horizontally.

Bent (1930) mentions that Major Bendire said "I have observed it clinging to the stalks of the sugarcane, boring them, and apparently greatly enjoying the sweet juices of that plant. . ."

The Birds of North America No. 702, 2002 states that the Hairy has been reported several times (Kilham 1965, Nickell 1965, Foster and Tate 1966, Short

1982): "Sap-drinking on trees or at sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus* ssp.) sap holes, and is also known to excavate into sugar cane to extract sugary sap (Audubon 1842)."

Perhaps behavior at a hummingbird feeder by this woodpecker has been reported before, but I am unaware of it.



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## February – March Calendar

**BOS website**  
<http://www.bosbirding.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

**January 28: BOS Meeting** at 7:30 PM. Mike Hamilton will discuss the 2003 October Count in an Historical Perspective, and Bob DeLeon will present the 2003 May Count in a Historical Context.

**February 8: Sunday. Northern Chautauqua County Field Trip.** Meet at 9 AM at Dunkirk Pier. From the I-90 take the Dunkirk exit and go north on route 60 to Rt. 5 west (Left) for about 1/4 mile and turn right onto the pier. Leader: Dick Miga (672-7363 or dmiga@netsync.net)

**February 11: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM. Mark Kandel of the NYSDEC will discuss Colonial Waterbird Management on Strawberry and Motor Islands.

**February 25: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM. Paul Hess, Wildlife Biologist of Iroquois NWR, will discuss: The Ecology of Arctic Nesting Geese.

**March 1 - May 10: Hamburg Hawkwatch at Lakeside Memorial Park** in Hamburg (off Camp Rd. bet. Routes 5 & 20). Generally 10 AM - 3 PM weather permitting. Jim Landau (941-3869 or kjlandau@localnet.com).

**March 7: Sunday. Niagara County, New York Owl Trip.** Meet at 1:00 PM near the Toys R Us entrance at the Summit Park Mall on Williams Road just south of Niagara Falls Blvd. in the Town of Wheatfield. Leader: Chuck Rosenberg (434-9403, rosestod@localnet.com, cell phone: 622-3278)

**March 10: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM. Heidi Bogner, NYSDEC Wildlife Biologist, will discuss: Marsh Birds.

**March 24: BOS Meeting** 7:30 PM. Gerry Rising will discuss, Is a GPS Right for Your Birding Today?

**March 27: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip** for early spring migrants. Leader: Willie D'Anna 731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com. Meet at 8 a.m. at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104 north of Lockport.



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## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 1 January, 2004

### THE MONTH: December

by Joe Thill

The Buffalo area enjoyed a relatively benign December with an extended period of very mild weather following below average temperatures for the first eleven days of the month but which ended the period with an average temperatures of 33.2 °F, three degrees warmer than average for the region; total precipitation for the month at Buffalo as measured at Greater Buffalo International Airport was 3.64 inches, 0.16 inch below normal for the region; half of this falling as snow. Total snowfall at the airport in December measured 21.6 inches and noticeably less in most of the region. The heaviest snowfalls at Buffalo in December were recorded on December 14th and again on the 17th, about 4.9 and 4.2 inches respectively...and a very timely 8 inches of lake effect snow on Christmas Day assured our area of its sixth consecutive White Christmas....the longest stretch on record.

Finally, the month closed out on a sunny but windy note after December ended with sunshine totaling 34 percent of the possible, seven points more than usual

for the period. Also, we were spared the huge nor'easter which moved up the Atlantic Coast on December 5th and 6th literally burying New England and Eastern New York. Also, Lake Erie ended the month two degrees milder than usual...with no sign of ice formation. (Meteorological data as provided by the local Climate Summary of the National

Weather Service via the internet and the Daily Weather Summary of the Buffalo News.)

The mild temperatures of October and early November continued to influence species richness among wintering populations of birds in western New York and southern Ontario in December as many 'half-hardy' passerines and other migrants lingered on in our region until late late in the month. As a glance at the 'Noteworthy Records' for December elsewhere in these pages indicates, for many birders it was an opportunity not to be missed. During the course of the Society's annual Niagara River field trip for gulls and other water birds on December 6th, the participants were rewarded with the sight of a juvenile Northern Gannet in dark gray plumage quartering up and down the river between the control gates in the upper river at Niagara Falls, Ontario to the town of Fort Erie (see photograph on page 2). Gannets occur annually in small numbers during the autumn passage of migrant waterfowl on Lake Ontario but viewers are rarely afforded the close shore-to-subject scrutiny of these birds provided by the narrow straits of the Niagara River.

Meanwhile, also on this date a second group of birders led by BOS members Dennis and Susan Gralak disembarked from their vehicles on the West River Road in the Town of Grand Island and entered a wooded area to seek 'a dark gray bird' that Susan O'Donnell saw [and initially identified] from her car while driving on that road. They quickly located the bird in the open glade flying from branch to branch on a large Sumac and other shrubbery, apparently sustaining itself on berries and other provender. The bird was undisturbed by the audience as the O'Donnells consulted their 'Sibley' (the latest *vade-mecum* for bird-

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3	<b>Noteworthy Records</b> <i>by Bruce Chilton</i>
7	<b>Northern Shrikes in Chautauqua Co</b> <i>Leonard DeFrancisco</i>
7	<b>Ripley/Westfield Turbine Project</b> <i>by Gil Randell</i>
8	<b>BOS Grant</b>
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12	<b>BOS Calendar</b>



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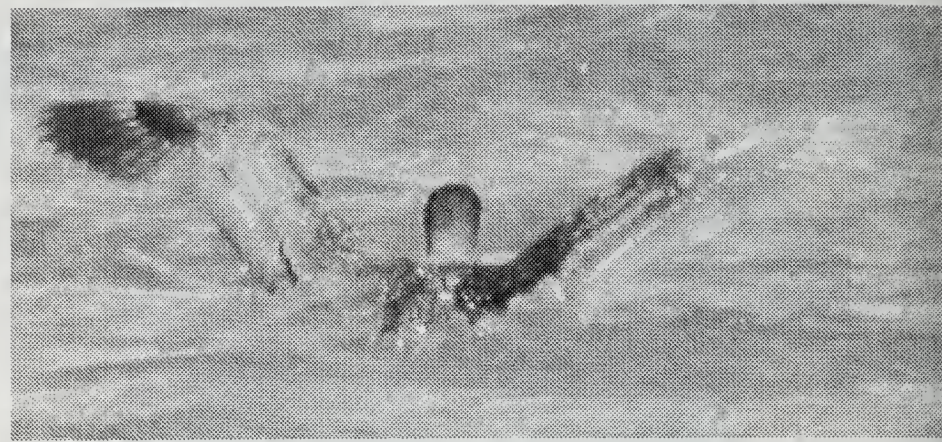
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ers) confirming her initial identification of a Townsend's Solitaire! It is only the second record of our study area, the first occurring two years earlier in Niagara County. (See *The Prothonotary*, vol 68, no 1)

Since the discovery of a White-fronted Goose in the company of 500 Canada Geese on the Iroquois NWR in March 2002, the former has been a regular annual spring and autumn migrant in our study area. On December 1st Bill Watson observed three geese of this species in the company of a small flock of Canada Geese by a pond in a waste disposal area on Aero Drive in the Town of Cheektowaga. The birds had been found by Sharon Krawczyk the previous day and subsequently observed

by others later in the month. Mike Morgante found a Ross's Goose at Cayuga Pool in Iroquois NWR, while participating in the December 27th Oak Orchard Swamp Christmas Bird Count. Most previous records of this species involve sightings of a single goose. A diminutive goose of this species was previously observed by Willie D'Anna and his party in Lowbanks, Ontario on November 23rd. An excellent photograph of the bird taken by D'Anna at the time is published on the front cover of *The Prothonotary* (vol 69, no 12).

A small population of California Gulls is now in its 12th year as winter residents of the lower Niagara River gorge at Niagara Falls, NY. Other winter residents of the Niagara River this season include a flock of 55 Tundra Swans in the east river at Beaver Island State Park and a wintering population of Bald Eagles estimated at two to four birds (2 immature and 2 or more adults) seen almost daily at Navy Island and the



**Northern Gannet; December 7, 2003; Niagara River, Niagara Falls, Ontario. Photo courtesy of Willie D'Anna**

Strawberry Island in the upper river and an undetermined number of eagles reported by casual observers down-river at Queenston, Ontario. Peregrine Falcons continued much in evidence in December with six sightings during the month including birds at Buckhorn Island State Park, Bird Island Pier, and South Buffalo Harbor. Finally, the Laridophiles among us enjoyed a good month of gull watching with both Black-headed and Mew Gulls among the myriad birds in the Niagara Gorge to test their skills, only one notable absence being those early winter favorites, Sabine's and Franklin's Gulls for the second straight year!

The writer wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Bob Andrie, Bill Burch, Willie D'Anna, and Gerry Rising in preparation of this article.

## Tifft Nature Preserve Field Trips

Tifft Nature Preserve is offering *Tifft Travels Birding Excursions*, a series of popular "leave the driving to us" field trips, which provide transportation by van with an experienced birder to various regional birding locations. Remaining trips for this year will travel to: Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge on March 31; Tifft Nature Preserve, Tillman Road Wildlife Management Area and Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge on May 12; and the Canadian shoreline for sandpipers and other avifauna on August 11 and August 18. For further information call 716-825-6397.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	28	3	Porter	Morgante
"	28	15	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
Common Loon	3	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	6	1	Grand I.	S & T O'Donnell
"	26	3	Bird I. Pier	Watson
"	28	3	Squaw I.	Yoerg
Pied-billed Grebe	14	1	LaSalle Park, Bflo.	Rosenburg
"	26	1	LaSalle Park, Bflo.	Watson
Horned Grebe	28	3	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
Red-necked Grebe	28	2	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
* <u>Northern Gannet</u>	6,7	1 imm	Niagara Falls	Watson, D'Anna, et al
Great Blue Heron	17	1	Ellery	DeFrancisco
<u>Gr. White-fr. Goose</u>	1	3	Cheektowaga	Watson
Snow Goose	3	2	Cassadaga Lake	Moshers
<u>Ross's Goose</u>	27	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Morgante et al
<u>C. Goose (<i>B. c. hutchinsii</i>)</u>	15	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Brant	6	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson, D'Anna (BOS)
Mute Swan	6	5	Porter	Morgante
"	13	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	S & T O'Donnell
Tundra Swan	2	55	Beaver I. SP	Burch
"	20	28	Bear Lake	Mosher
"	23; 27	16; 13	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	27	11	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	30	11	Iroquois NWR	Klick et al
Wood Duck	5	1	Goat I.	S & T O'Donnell
Gadwall	6	16	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson, D'Anna (BOS)
"	6	1	Goat I.	S & T O'Donnell
"	12	2	Bird I. Pier	Watson
American Black Duck	1; 12; 15	8; 6; 6	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	7	27	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Coblantz
"	23	36	Oakfield	Watson
"	23	24	Batavia WWTP	Watson et al
Northern Shoveler	1 - 25	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	7	57	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Coblantz
"	<u>23</u>	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	<u>30</u>	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
Northern Pintail	3; 17	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	7	9	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Coblantz
"	23	1	Oakfield	Watson, Lazarczyk
Green-winged Teal	6	1	Goat I.	S & T O'Donnell
"	7	7	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Coblantz
Redhead	14	10	Small Boat Harbor	Rosenburg



<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Ring-necked Duck	10	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	26	1	Bird I. Pier	Watson
Surf Scoter	27	3	Wilson	Rosenburg, Phillips
"	28	3	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
White-winged Scoter	9	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	12	Ft. Niagara SP	Roberson
Hooded Merganser	22	35	N. Tonawanda	Watson
Red-br. Merganser	17	55	Ellery	DeFrancisco
Ruddy Duck	7	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Coblantz
Bald Eagle	12	1	Grand I.	S & T O'Donnell
"	17	2 imm	Navy I.	Burch
"	17	1 ad	Grand I.	Burke
"	20	1 ad	Niagara Falls	D'Anna et al
"	27	3	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	28	1 imm	Porter	D'Anna et al
"	30	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick et al
Northern Harrier	28	<u>23</u>	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Red-shouldered Hawk	4	1	Gerry	DeFrancisco
"	9	1	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	9; 17	1; 1	Ellicott	DeFrancisco
Rough-legged Hawk	2 - 31	15 rees.	Throughout WNY	Several observers
Merlin	<u>1 - 26</u>	6 records (7 max)	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	<u>21</u>	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	<u>10</u>	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	<u>13</u>	1	Porter	D'Anna et al
"	<u>16</u>	2	South Buffalo Harbor	Andrle, et al
"	<u>16</u>	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
"	<u>27</u>	1	South Buffalo Harbor	Andrle
"	<u>31</u>	2	Buffalo	Burch
American Coot	10	10	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	26	3	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Watson
"	27	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Willet	<u>9; 16; 11; 28</u>	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
"	<u>26</u>	3	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna, DiTommaso
"	<u>12</u>	1	LaSalle Park, Bflo	Watson
Purple Sandpiper	26	3	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna, DiTommaso
Little Gull	6	1	Queenston	Watson, D'Anna et al (BOS)
<u>Black-headed Gull</u>	13	1	Lewiston	D'Anna, Potter
* <u>Mew Gull</u>	13	1	Adam Beck Hydro	D'Anna et al
<u>California Gull</u>	6, 16	1	Adam Beck Hydro	Watson, D'Anna (BOS)
"	7, 20, 21	1	Adam Beck Hydro	D'Anna et al
"	26	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna et al
Iceland Gull	6; 16	2; 2	Adam Beck Hydro	Watson, D'Anna et al (BOS); Watson
"	7	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7; 21	3; 2	Adam Beck Hydro	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	1	Porter	Morgante
Lesser Black-b. Gull	6	3; 2	Goat I; Adam Beck Hydro	Watson, D'Anna (BOS)



<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	6	1,1	Grand I., Beaver I. SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	7	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7	1	Adam Beek Hydro	Yoerg, Henderson
Glaucous Gull	6	1	Niagara Falls	Watson, D'Anna (BOS)
"	20	1	Adam Beek Hydro	D'Anna et al
Snowy Owl	14	1	Small Boat Harbor	Rosenburg
Long-eared Owl	28	5	Iroquois NWR	Rosenburg
Short-eared Owl	12	8	Shelby	S & T O'Donnell
"	14	4	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	7	Porter	Morgante, D'Anna et al
"	31	3	Porter	Roberson
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	27	1	Wilson-Tusearora SP	Rosenburg et al
Northern Shrike	3 - 28	13 rees.	Throughout WNY	Several observers
Horned Lark	28	80	Porter	Morgante
* <i>E. a. alpestris</i>	2	24	Chautauqua	Mosher, Farver
Tufted Titmouse	28	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Roberson
Carolina Wren	2; 4	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	6	2	Grand I.	S & T O'Donnell
"	27	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Lazarczyk
Winter Wren	9	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Eastern Bluebird	2; 4; 21	1; 4; 2	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	27	5	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	28	4	Porter	Morgante
* <u>Townsend's Solitaire</u>	6	1	Grand I.	S & T O'Donnell
Hermit Thrush	14	1	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	7	Porter	D'Anna et al
Gray Catbird	10	2	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogaeki
Northern Mockingbird	3; 13	1; 1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogaeki
Yellow-r. Warbler	28	2	Porter	D'Anna
Common Yellowthroat	<u>30</u>	1	Iroquois NWR	Kliek, Harris
Amer. Tree Sparrow	27	81	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Lazarczyk
Chipping Sparrow	2	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Swamp Sparrow	9	2	Tifft NP	Watson
"	27	7	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	30	1	Iroquois NWR	Kliek, Harris
White-thr. Sparrow	10	19	Buekhorn I. SP	Watson
"	10	2	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogaeki
White-cr. Sparrow	28	23	Porter	D'Anna et al
Lapland Longspur	28	2	Porter	Morgante
Snow Bunting	14	37	Times Beach	Rosenburg
"	20	22	Buffalo Harbor	Andrle
"	27	4	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	28	288	Porter	Morgante
Red-w. Blackbird	28	40	Porter	Morgante
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	2	Laneaster	Morgante
"	17	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	21	5	Wheatfield	Roberson, Bearss
"	22	20	Tonawanda	Hess
* White-w. Crossbill	13	1	Four Mile Creek SP	S & T O'Donnell
Common Redpoll	27	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	28	14	Porter	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	28	115	Porter	D'Anna et al
"	30; 31	2; 1	Niagara Falls	Roberson
"	31	1	Colden	Watson, Lazarezyk, Landau

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids previously recorded:** 278

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month:** 4

**Total for the year 2003:** 282

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

#### Addenda (2002)

Great Egret	12/6	1	Niagara R., Lewiston	Berry
Tundra Swan	12/15	150	Chautauqua Lake	Berry
Winter Wren	12/15	1	Busti	Berry
Eastern Bluebird	12/15	9	Busti	Berry
Fox Sparrow	12/2	1	Roger Tory Peterson Inst	Berry

#### Addenda (2003)

<u>Wilson's Storm Petrel</u>	9/19	1	Hamburg Town Park	Fox
"	9/26	1 (dead)	Chautauqua Lake	O'Brien
<u>Merlin</u>	3/1 - 3/26	2 - 8	U.B. South Campus	Yoerg
"	3/30	1	Yates	Yoerg
"	4/3,8,9,10	1-3	U.B. South Campus	Yoerg
"	6/11	1	Buffalo	Klick
<u>Peregrine Falcon</u>	3/1 - 3/26	1	U.B. South Campus	Yoerg
"	4/3, 5/5	1	U.B. South Campus	Yoerg
Horned Lark <i>E.a. alpestris</i>	1/20	20	Youngstown Road	Landau, Rew
<u>Sedge Wren</u>	6/10	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick
Golden-winged Warbler	7/15	1	Natureview Park	Pawlicki
			Amherst	



## Wintering Northern Shrikes in Chautauqua County

*by Leonard DeFrancisco*

On December 30, 1991 I took Tom Simmons, Steve Maggio and his son Jerry to look for wintering raptors. We tallied 44 plus many other bird species, the most interesting being an immature Northern Shrike found at Cutting in the Town of French Creek west of Chymer, NY. Steve thought shrikes were rare for the area, I replied, "h... man I know where two are near Cassadaga and a couple more near Mayville."

Later during that winter, on January 3, 1992, I took Tom Simmons to Shumla Road in the town of Pomfret south of Cassadaga where we saw two more Northern Shrikes which started my record keeping on this great killer. On three separate occasions since then, I've seen as many as five Northern Shrikes in a single day.

On December 7, 2003 while scouting for an upcoming CBC on the 14th I found six shrikes along about 2 1/2 miles of roadway: two adults on Waterman Road near Wilson Hollow Road, an immature and adult further east on Waterman, and then another immature and adult on Hopkins Road - shortly after turning from Waterman. All six birds were in the Town of Ellington. The next day five individuals were located in this same area. I then traveled to the Town of Carroll where I viewed one adult on Bunce Road, an adult on Dodge Road, and another adult on Oak Hill Road.

The scouting trips gave me great hopes for tallying a high number of Northern Shrikes on the Dec. 14th CBC. At first light on the 14th my patio feeders filled up with birds including two Carolina Wrens and numbers of other regulars. I told my wife, "with all the snow and wind its going to be a big day or a bummer". At 8:10 AM I found the first adult Northern Shrike on Gerry-Levant Road. At 9:20 and 9:50 AM two more adults were tallied on Hanson Road, a few minutes later an immature flew in nearby. Just a bit further at 10:05 AM an immature was sighted on Waterman Road. From Waterman I turned onto Hopkins Road and saw an immature at 10:43 AM. The snow was coming down hard by this time and white-outs from the wind made it hard for long distance viewing, "thank god" I thought that these shrikes were all close to the road. I had found six birds already and found number seven at Clarks Corners at 10:58 AM for my all-time one-day Northern Shrike record of seven. After lunch I was in the towns of Carroll and Poland with better weather but I didn't see another shrike but totaled 42 species making it a great day.

## Ripley/Westfield Turbine Project

*by Gil Randell*

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) have voiced serious concerns about a proposed wind power project in the towns of Ripley and Westfield.

The USFWS letter dated February 4, 2004 and the DEC letter dated February 12, 2004 both refer to the two successful bald eagle nests in the vicinity of the project. Each of the two nests successfully fledged two young last Spring, which means the area proposed for the project may now boast eight resident bald eagles. Over 100 Eagle sightings have been recorded since June 2003 in the vicinity of the proposed project. The most recent sightings have been in February of this year. The DEC letter comments on the finding of the eagle nests by stating, "As you know, these discoveries raise some very serious concerns about the appropriateness of this site for a wind power project."

The DEC letter also indicates that the agency is equally concerned about potential impacts to migrating birds, including song-birds and raptors. The DEC letter cites Ripley Hawk Watch data documenting a record number of migrating bald eagles and golden eagles in 2003 and nearly 20,000 other raptors traveling through the proposed location of the project. The DEC comments, "the applicant's decision to site a facility in such a significant migratory flyway heightens DEC's skepticism of the proposed project."

The USFWS shares DEC's concerns about the project, concluding their letter by saying, "Presently, the Service has strong concerns regarding the proposed project and its potential effects on State and Federally listed species and the large numbers of avian migrants, especially raptors. Selection of the project site is inconsistent with the Service's guidelines for avoiding and minimizing wildlife impacts. In addition, the area selected has been designated as an IBA. The project sponsor should reconsider the selection of this site for a wind turbine facility...."

The proposed project site also causes concern to the USFWS because of its likely risk to migrating bats. The USFWS letter states, "Ridges are known to facilitate bat migration. . . . Recently a high number of bats have been killed by turbines during migration on ridges in West Virginia." The USFWS estimates that one such project may have killed as many as 3,000 bats, an alarming number, given bats' low rate of reproduction.



## GRANT APPLICATION FOR 2004 AWARD

### Proposal Cover Sheet

Check one: Organization \_\_\_\_ Individual \_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work/School (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Project proposal:** The research proposal should include title, background and significance of the project, overall goals and specific aims, methods to be employed, materials and equipment required, personnel, schedule for completing the research plan, and a literature bibliography. The proposal should be sufficiently detailed to clearly present the plan. **The proposal will be typed. Attach this cover sheet to the proposal on submission.**

**Project budget:** A separate itemized project budget should be forwarded with your proposal.

Total amount requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Planned completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Agreement:** I (we) agree to make a full written report to the BOS describing in detail the results of the study or project. I (we) may also be required to present the results before a regular meeting of the Buffalo Ornithological Society (BOS). If for any reason this proposal cannot be carried out, I (we) will return all funds to the BOS.

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### For Students Only

**Faculty sponsor:** Please attach a reference letter from your faculty sponsor verifying your ability to carry out the proposed project and verifying his or her commitment to oversee your work

Faculty sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **GRANT APPLICATION FOR 2004 AWARD**

### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

**Proposal Deadline: April 30, 2004**

The Buffalo Ornithological Society makes annual monetary grants in support of activities related to the society's purpose and interests.

#### **Grant Categories**

1. Ornithological studies and research projects
2. Projects such as bird habitat preservation and nesting projects
3. Funding for college undergraduate and graduate projects

#### **Eligibility**

Persons and organizations residing in the BOS study area dedicated to birds and their welfare including:

1. Ornithological societies, bird clubs or groups in which bird concerns are an integral part
2. Individuals, both BOS members and nonmembers
3. College students including those attending out of area schools (Students must have a faculty sponsor.)

#### **Grant amounts**

1. Applicants may request grants up to \$750.00
2. The actual amount awarded will be recommended by the Special Projects Fund Advisory Committee based on funds available, proposal quality and monetary requirements of the project.
3. Requests may be made for continued funding of previously approved projects

#### **Project completion**

1. When the proposed project has been completed, the grant recipient must make a written report to the Society.
2. The grant recipient may be required to present or participate in a program on the subject before the BOS membership at a regular meeting.

#### **Application materials**

Please use the form provided on the opposite side of this sheet as your application cover sheet. Carefully follow the instructions and **be sure to forward: (1) your cover sheet, (2) your detailed description of proposed activities and (3) your itemized budget.**

**Mail your completed application to:**

**Special Projects Fund  
c/o Dr. R. L. DeLeon  
381 Cadman Drive  
Williamsville, NY 14221**



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American Robin	21
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Black Scoter	30
Black Vulture	35
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Black-throated Green Warbler	47
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Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	139
Bufflehead	137
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Fox Sparrow	6
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Hooded Warbler	127
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January (1-16), February (17-26), March  
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tember (93-110), October (111-118),  
November (119-132), December (133-142)



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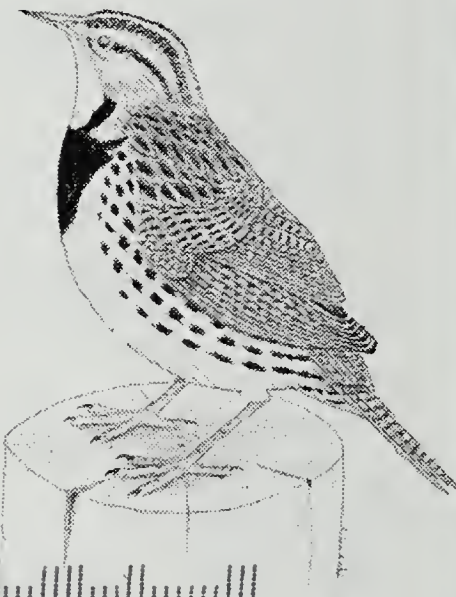
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## March – April Calendar

BOS website

<http://www.bosbirding.org/>



Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

**March through August** BOS members are expected to participate in the NY Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche for block assignments (drosche@juno.com or 652-8409).

**March 1 - May 10: Hamburg Hawkwatch at Lakeside Memorial Park** in Hamburg (off Camp Rd. bet. Routes 5 & 20). Generally 10 AM - 3 PM weather permitting. Jim Landau (941-3869 or kjlandau@localnet.com).

**March 7: Sunday. Niagara County, New York Owl Trip.** Meet at 1:00 PM near the Toys R Us entrance at the Summit Park Mall on Williams Road just south of Niagara Falls Blvd. in the Town of Wheatfield. Leader: Chuck Rosenberg (434-9403, rosestod@localnet.com, cell phone:622-3278)

**March 10: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Heidi Bogner, NYSDEC Wildlife Biologist, will discuss: Marsh Birds.

**March 24: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Gerry Rising will discuss, Is a GPS Right for Your Birding Today?

**March 27: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip** for early spring migrants. Leader: Willie D'Anna 731-4348 / dannapotter@wzrd.com. Meet at 8 a.m. at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104 north of Lockport.

**April 4: Sunday. Oak Orchard Swamps Field Trip.** Meet at 8:00 AM (Daylight Savings time) at Cayuga Pool parking lot which is on Route 77 in Iroquois NWR. Leader: Gail W. Seamans (585-937-5105 or Gails@netacc.net). Invite a friend who has not had the pleasure of being on a field trip.

**April 14: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Tom LaBlanc and Terry Yonker will discuss Kirtland's Warbler and Management of its Habitat.

**April 18: April Count.** All BOS members should participate. Contact Coordinator: Mike Hamilton (881-6709 or mhsr@wzrd.com)

**April 25: Sunday. Braddock Bay HawkWatch Trip.** Mike Zebehazy (BOS) and Bob Spahn (GOS). Meet at the Tanning Bed at Main and Transit at 7:00 AM for 9 AM rendezvous at Braddock Bay. This trip may be canceled due to weather. Contact Mike at zebs@adelphia.net or 662-6987.

**April 2 7:30 PM.**



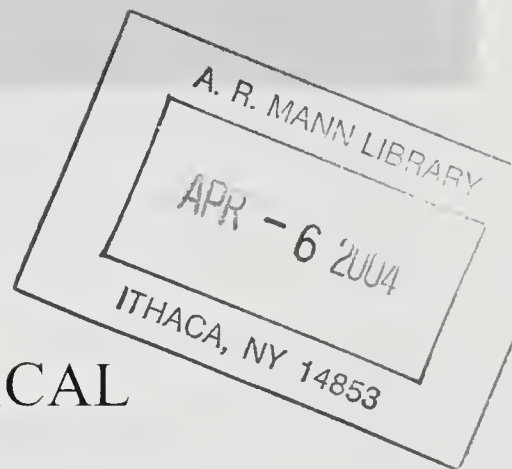
# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 2 February, 2004



### THE MONTH: January

*by Mike Zebehazy*

The month started with unusual warmth including a reading of 56 °F on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, but any thoughts of a continuation of the mild start to the new year were quickly dashed as January brought a siege of winter cold and snow to our area. This resulted in the coldest January in ten years and the fifth coldest in 61 years of record-keeping at the Buffalo airport. The month began with three mild days. Then the pattern changed to allow for repeated surges of arctic cold across the Great Lakes and Northeastern U.S. This resulted in four weeks of some of the most persistent cold and snow ever seen in these parts. The lake effect machine was in near-constant high gear, mainly off Lake Ontario and the upper lakes; so, although there were no major snowstorms, the constant snow added up to the eighth greatest total in 61 years. The relentless, small daily snowfall combined with gusty winds and frigid temperatures made overall conditions rough.

The average temperature of 17.4 °F was more than seven degrees colder than normal. Five days dropped below zero and the -7 on January 10 was the coldest temperature anytime in eight years. Seventeen days had single digit lows and three of those days had single digit highs. Precipitation was close to normal and total sunshine of 30 percent was a few hours more than usual. Lake Erie was nearly all ice-covered by the final week.

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**BOS website has  
been updated [http://  
www.bosbird-  
ing.org/](http://www.bosbirding.org/)**

The birding year was off to a tremendous start right from day one with sightings of Greater White-fronted and Ross's Goose at Iroquois NWR. The birds were found at Cayuga Pool in the company of over 2000 Canada geese and more than a dozen Tundra Swans. Watson noted that the Ross's Goose appeared to be the same one observed December 27, 2003 at the same location. While censusing birds for the NYS Waterfowl Count, David Suggs watched as a diminutive Canada Goose flew overhead along the lakeshore at Point Breeze. Flying with a flock of full-sized Canadas, this bird appeared to be about the size of a Mallard and was then identified as a Richardson's Canada



Peregrine Falcon was photographed by Willie D'Anna at Niagara Falls on Goat Island on January 1, 2004.



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Goose (*B. c. hutchinsii*). A Northern Shoveler described as a poorly marked molting male continued at the Sinking Ponds site in East Aurora at least until the water completely froze over, while the Willet that had been residing at the south end of the Bird Island Pier was last reported (on Dial-a-bird) on January 5<sup>th</sup>.

Unusual gulls were in the news this month also. David Suggs briefly watched a very rare Laughing Gull at an unlikely location - over the TJ Maxx plaza at Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard in Amherst. Gordon Bellerby reported a Black-headed Gull at the Queenston boat launch and, according to phone reports, two of this species were spotted at the Niagara-On-The-Lake flypast

on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Also, a California Gull that has been reported regularly this winter was still at the base of the Robert Moses Power Plant in Lewiston yet no verifying report was submitted, perhaps because this bird has become too "regular."

While Peter Yoerg continued to track the Merlin population at the UB south campus, with up to six birds present there, individuals of this species were observed and photographed both in Niagara Falls, Ontario during a waterfowl censusing trip and in the Town of Alabama on a pole in front of a house on Casey Road. Although only one report of Peregrine Falcon appears in the Noteworthy Records, other reports via Dial-a-Bird tell of one Peregrine carrying a pigeon at the north Grand Island bridge and two others, one an adult and the second an immature bird on the south side of the Cargill building on Fuhrmann Boulevard along the Buffalo waterfront.

As many as six owl species could be found somewhere in the BOS territory this month. On the day of the Wilson and Lake Ontario Plains CBC a Northern Saw-whet Owl was heard calling before dawn at Wilson-Tuscarora State Park. What seemed to be the only Snowy Owl of the season was reported again at the airbase in Niagara Falls, viewed from Walmore Road. Later in the month another Snowy was spotted flying over Lake Ontario off Dietz Road in the Town of Porter.

Although Bohemian Waxwings were reported in large numbers not far outside the BOS study area in Ontario, observers here had to be satisfied with two individuals discovered at Golden Hills State Park in the Town of Somerset. They were only seen for two days at this location. These birds were associating with American Robins and Starlings and no Cedar Waxwings were in the vicinity.

Winter finches were reported from many locations but there wasn't the irruption hoped for; yet, persistent observers were still able to locate the usual suspects except for Evening Grosbeak which has been extremely sparse in recent years. I know of only a single individual of this species reported this month. It flew by, calling repeatedly at dusk on January 4<sup>th</sup> in Hamburg as that CBC drew to an end. On the 31<sup>st</sup> Lynne Landon, along with Terry Yonker, was able to clearly identify a Hoary Redpoll at her feeder in Youngstown. This bird was feeding with a small flock of Common Redpolls.

Dunkirk harbor with its enticing open waters warmed by the nearby power plant became a hot spot for waterfowl toward the end of the month as the frigid temperatures locked up most other waterways with ice. More than 30 records were submitted for this location.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> Mike Morgante watched from his desk as a Turkey Vulture flew over the Ecology & Environment, Inc. headquarters building in Lancaster. Morgante speculated that since this has been a harsh winter perhaps this was a wanderer, searching for carrion, from the only known winter roost in WNY at Letchworth Park.

Weather data is from the monthly weather summary supplied by the National Weather Service at Buffalo, NY. I wish to thank Gerry Rising for reviewing and editing this article and David Suggs and his work with Dial-a-Bird



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	1	1	Ft. Erie	Rew, Horbett
"	4	1	Buekhorn I. SP	S & T O'Donnell
Pied-billed Grebe	1	4	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	5	1	N. Tonawanda	Watson
"	25	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Lazarczyk, Watson
"	31	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Horned Grebe	1	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	28	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Lazarczyk
Red-necked Grebe	1	1	Wilson	J & K Landau
"	19	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	31	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
D.-crested Cormorant	1; 17	70; 62	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	28	30	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	31	5	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Great Blue Heron	1	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	11	1	Lewiston	S & T O'Donnell
"	17	1	Poland	DeFrancisco
"	17	3	Motor I.	Lazarczyk, Bureh
"	25	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Black-cr. Night-Heron	17	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
Turkey Vulture	<u>30</u>	1	Lancaster	Morgante
<u>Gr. White-fr. Goose</u>	1	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson, et al
<u>Ross's Goose</u>	1	1	Iroquois NWR	Lazarczyk, Watson
"	2	1	Iroquois NWR	J & K Landau, Rew
C. Goose ( <i>B. c. hutchinsii</i> )	10	1	Evans	D & D Suggs
Mute Swan	17	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	25	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
"	31	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Tundra Swan	1	13	Iroquois NWR	Beattie
"	2	14	Iroquois NWR	J & K Landau, Rew
"	17	6	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
American Black Duck	1	127	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	3	10	Freedom	DeSha
"	18	2	Elma/Marilla	Holmes
"	22	4	Ellicott	DeFrancisco
Northern Shoveler	<u>1</u>	2	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Lazarczyk, et al
"	<u>8</u>	1	E. Aurora	Watson
Northern Pintail	1	2	Batavia WWTP	Lazarczyk, Watson
"	3	1	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell



<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
..	9; 10	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
..	25	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Green-winged Teal	3	1	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
Canvasback	1	2	Batavia WWTP	Lazarczyk, Watson
..	10; 18	1500; 1500	Grand I.	Lazarczyk
..	17	2000	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk, Burch
..	31	25	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Redhead	19	20	Ft. Erie/Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
..	28	6	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Lazarczyk
Ring-necked Duck	3	5	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
..	19	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
..	28	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Lazarczyk
Lesser Scaup	1	1	La Salle Park, Bflo.	Lazarczyk, Watson
..	19	5	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
Surf Scoter	1	1	Sheridan	Rew, Horbett
..	18	1	Ft. Niagara SP	S O'Donnell
White-winged Scoter	11	3	Olcott	Watson
..	17	36	Ft. Niagara	Yoerg, Henderson
..	19	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
..	29	1	Welland Canal, Ont.	Lazarczyk
..	31	200	Ft. Niagara SP	S & T O'Donnell
Black Scoter	11	1	Ft. Niagara SP	S & T O'Donnell
Hooded Merganser	5; 28	13; 2	N. Tonawanda; Dunkirk	Watson
..	25	11	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
..	31	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Common Merganser	1	6	Batavia WWTP	Lazarczyk, Watson
Red-br. Merganser	28	3	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Lazarczyk
..	31	10	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Ruddy Duck	1	1	Batavia WWTP	Lazarczyk, Watson
..	17; 18	1; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
..	25	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
..	31	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Bald Eagle	1	5 ad, 6 imm.	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, LeBlanc
..	1	2	Iroquois NWR	Lazarczyk, Watson et al
..	2	4	Iroquois NWR	J & K Landau, Rew
..	11	1 ad	Allegheny SP	Yoerg, Henderson
..	15; 24	3; 1 imm.	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk
..	16; 17	1	Strawberry I.	Lazarczyk et al
..	25	1 ad.	Ripley	DeFrancisco
..	25	1 imm.	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-shouldered Hawk	25	1	Ellicott	DeFrancisco
..	31	2	Jamestown	Berry
Rough-legged Hawk	3 - 31	8 reports	WNY	Several observers
Merlin	<u>1</u>	1	Alabama	D & D Suggs
..	<u>3 - 21</u>	5 reports; 6 max	UB south campus	Yoerg
..	<u>11</u>	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Zebchazy, Happ
Peregrine Falcon	5	1	Buffalo	Morgante
American Coot	1	7	Buffalo	J & K Landau, Watson, Lazarczyk
..	4	5	Buffalo	S & T O'Donnell
..	28	49	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Willet	<u>1</u>	1	Bird I. Pier	Lazarczyk, Watson
"	<u>3</u>	1	Bird I. Pier	D'Anna et al. Yoerg
<u>Laughing Gull</u>	11	1	Amherst	Suggs
Little Gull	11	1	Lewiston	S & T O'Donnell
<u>Black-headed Gull</u>	8	1	Queenston	Bellerby
Iceland Gull	17	1	Ft. Niagara	Yoerg, Henderson
Glaucous Gull	17; 18	1; 1	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Horbett
"	17	1	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Yoerg, Henderson
Great Black-b. Gull	31	50	Dunkirk Harbor	Berry
Snowy Owl	3	1	Wheatfield	D'Anna et al
"	17	1	Niagara Falls Airport	Yoerg, Henderson
Long-eared Owl	11	2	Iroquois NWR	Rosenburg, S & T O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl	1	5	Wilson	J & K Landau
"	11	2	Shelby	S & T O'Donnell
"	17	1	Niagara Falls Airport	Yoerg, Henderson
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	4	1	Bennington	Seamans
Northern Shrike	3 - 25	9 reports	Throughout WNY	Several observers
Common Raven	11	4	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Horned Lark	17	20	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	18	40	Porter	Lazarczyk, Connarc
"	18	67	Porter	S & T O'Donnell
"	19	175	Yates	S & T O'Donnell
"	31	30	Machias	DeSha
<u>E. a. alpestris</u>	25	19; 26	Yates; Somerset	Rew, Horbett, Walker
<u>E. a. praticola</u>	25	3; 4	Yates; Somerset	Rew, Horbett, Walker
Tufted Titmouse	1	4	Colden	J & K Landau
"	4	4	Boston	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	18	1; 1	Buckhorn I. SP; Grand I.	S & T O'Donnell
"	25	3	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
Carolina Wren	1 - 31	8 reports	Throughout WNY	Several observers
Eastern Bluebird	1	8	Red House	DeSha
"	9	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	11	3	Joseph Davis SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	17	1	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
American Robin	11	40	Golden Hill SP	Watson, Fox, Lazarczyk
"	31	100	Olcott	S & T O'Donnell
Gray Catbird	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Northern Mockingbird	1 - 31	1	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
"	18	1	Joseph Davis SP	S & T O'Donnell
<u>Bohemian Waxwing</u>	10	2	Golden Hill SP	D'Anna et al
"	11	2	Golden Hill SP	Watson et al
White-thr. Sparrow	1 - 31	7 reports	Throughout WNY	Several observers
White-cr. Sparrow	18	1	Joseph Davis SP	S & T O'Donnell
Lapland Longspur	10; 17	3; 16	Yates	D'Anna et al
"	17	1	Porter	Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	7; 12	Somerset; Yates	S & T O'Donnell
"	25	14	Somerset	Rew, Horbett, Walker
"	18	10	Porter	Lazarczyk, Connarc
Snow Bunting	18	17	Farmersville	DeSha, LeBlanc
"	18	3	Porter	Lazarczyk, Connarc



<u>Species</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
..	18	20	Orchard Park	Morgante
..	19	65	Yates	S & T O'Donnell
..	20; 26	1; 2	Lancaster	Morgante
..	25	225; 16	Yates; Somerset	Rew, Horbett, Walker
..	31	4	Maehias	DeSha
Red-winged Blackbird	26	1 f	Bethany	Beattie
Brown-headed Cowbird	2	1	Colden	J & K Landau
..	26	3	Niagara Falls	S O'Donnell
Purple Finch	11	1	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
Common Redpoll	2 - 31	11 reports	Throughout WNY	Several observers
<u>Hoary Redpoll</u>	31	1	Youngstown	Landon, Yonker
Pine Siskin	11	2	Allegheny SP	Yoerg, Henderson
American Goldfinch	10 - 31	60 max	Bennington	Scamans

Canada Goose, American Wigeon, Mallard, Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Eastern Screech-Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pilcated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, House Sparrow.

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month:**

**107**

**Total for the year 2003:**

**107**

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## **Birding Quiz**

*By Mike Morgante*

Most birders can easily identify the common black-birds of Western New York. But how well do you know all the field marks? Eye color is often an unnecessary field mark because other more obvious field marks quickly provide the identification (e.g. the red epaulets of an adult male Red-winged Blackbird). However, eye color can be a useful field mark and can help when identification is troublesome.

*Which of the following blackbird species have dark eyes and which have pale eyes?*

Red-winged Blackbird  
Common Grackle  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Rusty Blackbird  
Brewer's Blackbird

*Hint: There can be more than one answer for each species. Consider differences in age and sex.*

## **Quiz Answers**

All Red-winged Blackbirds (male, female, immature) have dark eyes.

Adult Common Grackles have pale eyes. Immature birds have dark eyes.

All Brown-headed Cowbirds have dark eyes.

All Rusty Blackbirds have pale eyes.

Female Brewer's Blackbirds have dark eyes (except occasionally having pale eyes). Males have pale eyes.



# Annual New York State Waterfowl Count: January 10-18, 2004

by Bill Burch

**INTRODUCTION.** This report gives the results for our Region 1 of the Annual Waterfowl Count of The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs (shortly to become The New York State Ornithological Association). Region 1, assigned to BOS, consists of the New York part of the BOS study area and includes the Niagara River and adjacent waters of Lakes Erie and Ontario. Census results will be used by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to monitor long-term population changes. State-wide results will be published in the Federation Journal, *The Kingbird*.

**RESULTS.** The 37,256 individuals counted in 2004 was down 28% from the 52,095 found last year. The 32 species equaled the record of last year. The 294 Tundra Swans, found mostly at Beaver Island State Park, is a record high, and likely will again be the highest number found among the 10 regions of the statewide Count. Bufflehead, at 4304, is another record high, attributable to one team finding, for the third year, an early morning transient flock near the ice boom. Last year 88% of New York's Canvasbacks came down the Niagara River, so it is of concern that our count, 4090, was the lowest of our last nine years; it was down 61% from last year. The three Northern Shovelers were the surprise find of the Count. Two males and one female were seen off Beaver Island State Park. Only one other Shoveler has been seen in the 50 years of our Count. Greater Scaup, at 8066, was the lowest of our last four Counts. This was about half the 15,447 seen last year. This drop is attributed to the frozen condition of the Buffalo south harbor (Area H): Last year it held 10,000 Scaup; this year it had none. Long-tailed Duck numbers improved somewhat, 868 versus 392 last year, but still remain below the 2126 to 5692 of recent years. The drop has been attributed to the outbreak of Type E botulism. These ducks were spread along the lower Niagara River, including a flock of 600 at Queenston.

The Bald Eagle tally was seven for the Jan. 10-18 period, and 22 for the Jan. 1-15 period. We count these as part of the state-wide eagle census conducted by the New York State DEC. The list of species, below, follows the new AOU taxonomic order of species. Pertinent Areas of sightings are noted.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Canada Goose	4228	2nd highest
Mute Swan	1	rare (I)
Tundra Swan	294	record high (G,I)
Wood Duck	6	average (P,Q)
Gadwall	12	low (F mainly)
American Wigeon	24	variable (D,C,F)
Am. Black Duck	287	average
Mallard	8558	record high
Mallard X Black	3	rare (Q,E)
Northern Shoveler	3	rare, rec. high (G)
Northern Pintail	5	variable
Green-winged Teal	2	rare (M,P)
Canvasback	4090	low (G mainly)
Redhead	229	average
Ring-necked Duck	41	high (F,G)
Greater Scaup	8066	low (E mainly, F,G)
Lesser Scaup	8	low (I,F)
White-winged Scoter	338	high (D mainly,B)
Long-tailed Duck	868	low (C,D)
Bufflehead	4304	record high (F)
Common Goldeneye	1683	average (F,E,B)
Hooded Merganser	98	high (E,G,I)
Common Merganser	3784	average (F,E,B)
Red-br. Merganser	200	variable (F mainly)
Ruddy Duck	1	rare (I)
Red-throated Loon	1	rare (D)
Common Loon	2	uncommon (B,C)
Pied-billed Grebe	9	high (I,D,K)
Horned Grebe	1	variable (J)
Red-necked Grebe	1	rare (F)
Double-cr. Cormorant	72	high (I mainly, G,D)
American Coot	37	low (I mainly,G)
<u>Total Species:</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>high</u>
<u>Total Individuals:</u>	<u>37,256</u>	<u>average</u>

**DISCUSSION.** The weather was much colder than that of last year's Count. Five of the daily lows were below 0°F, and on three days the high was 8°F or less. The most-utilized day was the target day of Sunday, January 11, when the temperature climbed from minus 9 to plus 27, and ended with 9 inches or more of snow. Five snow squalls dumped some 6 inches more. Wind added to the discomfort during the January 10-18 Count period.

Lake Erie at Dunkirk was frozen for about a mile out [with exception of open water near the power plant]. About 15 percent of our eastern end was still open. Lake Ontario was open, but with extensive ice packs and shore ice. In the Southern Tier the Allegheny River was largely ice-filled, and the Allegheny Reservoir was frozen, as was Chautauqua Lake.

The freezing of streams had the effect of concentrating ducks in the few open spots. For example, Scajaquada Creek in Forest Lawn Cemetery, which had



194 scattered Mallards in the 2003 Count, had 1150 crowded together this year. The effect of the harbor ice displacing 10,000 Scaup was described earlier.

The low count of Canvasback (down 61% from last year) might be ascribed to their bypassing this area in search of more-open waters on their southward migration route. Their favored water around Grand Island had extensive pans of thin ice for several days. The split waterfowl hunting season this year was Oct. 18 to Dec. 2 (44 days) and Dec. 27 to Jan. 9 (13 days), ending at sunset. The next morning, Jan. 10, marked the start of the Waterfowl Count. In areas of heavy hunting, it may take several days for the flocks to calm down. (Grand Island has 42 State-assigned shooting blinds, in addition to several dozen on private shorelines). Canvasbacks are late arrivers, so any hunting success is during the second part of the season, and our best count is near its end. The dates favor the Canvasbacks, so despite their abundance, they made up only 15 of the 1079 kills reported on Grand Island. Mallards and Scaup accounted for nearly half.

Wintering Bald Eagles arrived on Navy Island around December 17, and are expected to return north near the end of March. Teams reported 21 sightings, representing at least six individuals, plus one seen by Tim Baird's team near Salamanca. He said most of their local eagles had moved to open water in Pennsylvania. The exodus was illustrated by the sighting by Mike DeSha on January 1, before the freeze-up, of 11 Bald Eagles at the Allegheny Reservoir. Water in Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge was frozen during the Count period and no eagles were reported. Earlier, while water was still open there on January 2, Jim Landau spotted two adults and two immatures near the Cayuga Pool eagle nest site.

### TERRITORIES AND PARTY LEADERS

A	Lake Ontario: Point Breeze to Olcott	J. Farrell
B	Lake Ontario: Olcott to Ft. Niagara	P. Yoerg
C	Ft. Niagara to Niagara Falls, NY side	R. DeLeon
D	Niagara-on-Lake to Niagara Falls, Can. side	M. Zebehazy
E	Buffalo harbor to Goat Is., NY side	J. Thill & G. Rising
F	L. Erie to Horseshoe Falls, Can. side	W. Broderick & G. Rising
G	Grand Island (in the Niagara River)	D. Brasure
H	Lake Erie: Buffalo harbor to Silver Creek	D. Suggs
I	Lake Erie: Silver Creek to PA state line	F. Rew
J	Jamestown and Chautauqua Lake	R. Sundell
K	Olean and Salamanca	T. Baird
L	Allegany County	D. Burton
M	Batavia	G. Seamans
N	Oak Orchard and Tonawanda WMAs	E. Ratajezak
O	Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge	E. Ratajezak
P	Amherst, Clarence, Cheektowaga	W. Burch
Q	Delaware Park, Forest Lawn Cemetery	W. D'Anna
R	South Park, Cazenovia Park and Creek	J. Landau

**PARTICIPANTS:** The compiler extends his thanks to the BOS members and friends who took part in this annual count: Robert Andrie, Tim Baird, Don Brasure, Bill Broderick, Bill Burch, Olive Burch, Doris Burton, Ken Cohen, Willie D'Anna, Donna DeLeon, Robert DeLeon, Mike DeSha, Stephen Eaton, Jerald Farrell, Mike Galas, Douglas Happ, Barbara Henderson, Audrey Horbett, Mary Jordan, Jim Landau, Karen Landau, Jerry Lazarczyk, Tom LeBlanc, Robert Lipp, Ruth Lundin, Jane Mason, Max Mason, Jim Pawlicki, Ed Ratajezak, Frances Rew, Gerry Rising, Don Roberson, Paul Schnell, Gail Seamans, William Seleen, David Suggs, Debbie Suggs, Robert Sundell, Joe Thill, Peter Yoerg, and Mike Zebehazy.

### Feeder Count by Gerry Rising

As many readers of this journal know, I invited readers of my "Nature Watch" column in *The Buffalo News* to send in records of their observations of their feeders during the period February 2-8, 2004. The results were a bit overwhelming: over 270 responses. It took weeks to sort them out. I was finally able to tabulate 255 of them; others were illegible or incomplete (see complete Table on page 21).

Despite the expected problems with identification — lots of Purple Finches, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Carolina Chickadees and even a Red-cockaded Woodpecker — I believe that the responses give a rather good picture especially of the more common species. I made what I believe were some reasonable adjustments: most Purple Finches became House Finches except for a few Southern Tier reports or in a few cases where both were recorded; Red-headed Woodpeckers became Red-bellied Woodpeckers again unless both as well as Downy and Hairy were reported (only one report survived). I also queried a few reports: one flock of grackles turned out to have very short tails and metamorphosed into starlings, etc.

Even though some hawks may have been misidentified as to species, their appearance at 32% or more of the feeders is, I believe, worthy of note. (I suspect that this is a very low estimate as many readers treated my request strictly: as only birds visiting their feeders. Those who phoned results often mentioned hawks only after I asked about them.)

Less formal reports of the results of this count appear in my "Nature Watch" column of March 1 and in *Audubon Outlook*. I supply here only the overall totals that have not been reported elsewhere. I have retained the original spreadsheet and associated files and will try to respond to specific inquiries.

I thank the many BOS members who contributed to this project.



# February 2-8, 2004 Feeder Count

	maximum count	average count	total birds	% of total	rank of total	number of stations	% of stations	rank of occurrence
Mallard	19	9	53		25	6	2%	
Harrier	1	1	3			3	1%	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	1	31			30	12%	19
Cooper's Hawk	3	1	41		28	37	15%	18
Red-tailed Hawk	2	1	21			19	7%	23
American Kestrel	2	1	10			10	4%	
Peregrine Falcon	1	1	1			1		
Ring-necked Pheasant	2	1	9			8	3%	
Wild Turkey	23	10	142	1%	19	14	5%	26
Ring-billed Gull	7	7	7			1		
Rock Pigeon	13	5	71		23	13	5%	27
Mourning Dove	44	9	1642	9%	4	189	74%	5
Great Horned Owl	1	1	3			3	2%	
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	1	1			1		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	8	1	157	1%	17	117	46%	9
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3	1	7			5	2%	
Downy Woodpecker	28	3	513	3%	11	195	76%	4
Hairy Woodpecker	12	2	185	1%	16	104	41%	13
Northern Flicker	3	1	43		27	29	11%	20
Pileated Woodpecker	2	1	12			9	4%	
Eastern Phoebe	1	1	1			1		
Northern Shrike	1	1	1			1		
Blue Jay	10	4	582	3%	9	161	63%	6
American Crow	8	3	240	1%	15	71	28%	16
Black-capped Chickadee	38	5	1105	6%	6	203	80%	2
Tufted Titmouse	13	3	249	1%	14	87	34%	14
Red-breasted Nuthatch	10	2	154	1%	18	77	30%	15
White-breasted Nuthatch	13	2	352	2%	12	149	58%	7
Brown Creeper	2	1	14			11	4%	30
Carolina Wren	2	1	16			13	5%	27
Winter Wren	1	1	1			1		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	2	2			1		
Eastern Bluebird	8	3	15			5	2%	
American Robin	15	4	34		30	8	3%	
Northern Mockingbird	1	1	4			4	2%	
European Starling	500	13	1519	9%	5	117	46%	9
Cedar Waxwing	32	15	60		24	4	2%	
Eastern Towhee	1	1	1			1		
American Tree Sparrow	98	9	552	3%	10	62	24%	17
Song Sparrow	5	2	46		26	21	8%	22
White-throated Sparrow	15	4	105	1%	21	29	11%	20
White-crowned Sparrow	8	4	41		28	11	4%	30
Dark-eyed Junco	45	9	1816	10%	3	208	82%	1
Snow Bunting	24	14	28			2	1%	
Northern Cardinal	30	5	988	6%	8	200	78%	3
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	1	1			1		
Red-winged Blackbird	2	1	8			6	2%	
Rusty Blackbird	25	13	26			2	1%	
Common Grackle	9	5	10			2	1%	
Brown-headed Cowbird	5	2	15			7	3%	
Purple Finch	20	5	97	1%	22	19	7%	23
House Finch	55	9	1044	6%	7	116	45%	12
Common Redpoll	100	17	285	2%	13	17	7%	25
Hoary Redpoll	1	1	2			2	1%	
Pine Siskin	40	10	119	1%	20	12	5%	29
American Goldfinch	260	16	2415	14%	1	148	58%	8
Evening Grosbeak	1	1	1			1	1%	
House Sparrow	100	16	1875	11%	2	117	46%	9
"sparrows"	200	17	852	5%		50	20%	
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>17628</b>					
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>11</b>						
<b>Overall Total Species</b>	<b>58</b>							
<b>Hawks Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>1%</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>32%</b>	
<b>Introduced Species</b>								
European Starling	500	12	1519	9%		122	48%	
House Finch	55	9	1044	6%		119	47%	
House Sparrow	100	15	1875	11%		121	47%	
<b>Total Introductions</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>4438</b>	<b>25%</b>		<b>193</b>	<b>76%</b>	



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## April – May Calendar

**BOS website**  
<http://www.bosbirding.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

**March through August** BOS members are expected to participate in the N<sup>Y</sup> Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosehe (drosche@juno.com/652-8409)

**March 1 - May 10: Hamburg Hawkwatch at Lakeside Memorial Park** in Hamburg (off Camp Rd. bet. Routes 5 & 20). Generally 10 AM - 3 PM weather permitting. Jim Landau (941-3869 or kjlandau@localnet.com).

**April 4: Sunday. Oak Orchard Swamps Field Trip.** Meet at 8:00 AM (Daylight Savings time) at Cayuga Pool parking lot which is on Route 77 in Irquois NWR. Leader: Gail W. Seamans (585-937-5105 or Gails@netacc.net). Invite a friend who has not had the pleasure of being on a field trip.

**April 14: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Tom LeBlanc and Terry Yonker will discuss Kirtland's Warbler and Management of its Habitat.

**April 18: April Count.** All BOS members should participate. Contact Coordinator: Mike Hamilton (881-6709 or mhshr@wzrd.com)

**April 25: Sunday. Braddock Bay HawkWatch Trip.** Mike Zebehazy (BO) and Bob Spahn (GOS). Meet at the Tanning Bed at Main and Transit at 7:00 AM for 9 AM rendezvous at Braddock Bay. This trip may be canceled due to weather conditions. Contact Mike at zebs@adelphia.net or 662-6987.

**April 28: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Business meeting.

**May 5: Vaughn Lecture 7:00-8:30.** Edward Burtt will discuss Life Among the Feathers in the Buffalo Museum of Science Auditorium (no charge). At 5:00 PM there will be a "Bird and Buffet" in the Cummings Room.

**May 9: Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach for warblers.** Meet at the Tifft Nature Preserve parking lot (off Furman Blvd.) at 7:30 AM. Leader: Bill Bogacki (674-5781). Remember the Miracle of the Gulls

**May 12: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM.** Art Clark will present a behind the scenes tour of the museum's vertebrate zoology collections with emphasis on birds.

**May 16: May Count.** Coordinator: Robert DeLeon (626-0325 or RLDeLeon@Yahoo.com). BOS members should plan to participate.

**May 26 BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.**

**June 5-6 Adirondack Birding Festival.** Contact Mike Galas.

**June 7 Dinner at 6:00 PM.** Tifft Nature Preserve. Bring your dinner.



# The PROTHONOTARY



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## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 3 March, 2004

### THE MONTH: February

by Michael Turisk

Meteorologically speaking, February 2004 was rather uneventful with few extremes. For winter-weary birders, February brought a welcome break from the Hyperborean weather of January. The month began seasonably cold, moderated slightly, then dropped into a brief, albeit sharp cold wave in mid-month, with the only sub-zero temperature occurring on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The average temperature of 25.5 °F was only 0.4 °F below average. Even in this, our driest month, precipitation was meager at only 1.15 inches, which was less than half the usual amount. It was the 8<sup>th</sup> driest February in the 61 years of record at the Buffalo Airport. In addition, snowfall was scant at only 5.9 inches, nearly one-third the norm and the 6<sup>th</sup> least in Buffalo weather annals. The 2.4 inches that fell on the 21<sup>st</sup> was the only appreciable snowfall of the month. Although there was snow cover throughout the period, by month's end only 1 inch remained from the 14 inches measured on the 1<sup>st</sup>. February was also a relatively bright month with 44 per cent of possible sunshine received. The final four days of the month experienced 98 per cent sunshine, incandescent and

norm for Lake Erie in February. On the 1<sup>st</sup>, Fran Rew and Barbara Walker observed a Red-throated Loon at the harbor. Rew noted the "typical loon shape, its long body riding low on the water...the bill was slender as compared to bill of Common Loon. Upper mandible was straight and the lower mandible curved upward..." Although Red-throated Loons make regular passage on Lake Ontario, records from other locales, including Lake Erie, are noteworthy, especially in winter.

Over the last several years, I have enjoyed Peter Yoerg's fascinating accounts of UB's Main Street Merlins. Yoerg has done an admirable job of documenting these birds, including the 6 observed at UB on the 12th. A single Merlin observed feeding on an unidentified bird at Somerset, *Niagara* on the 1<sup>st</sup> by D'Anna *et al*, though not unprecedented, is certainly noteworthy.

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, Lynne Landon, Art Hannah and Terry Yonker observed a drake Tufted Duck below Lock #1 at the Welland Canal, Ontario, Canada. This *Aythya* was described as being the "Size and shape of Lesser Scaup only head more rounded and with obvious tuft on back of head." The origins of some Tufted Ducks in North America remains in question; however, it is believed that numbers migrate from Iceland to North America along with Greater Scaup, with the majority of these supposed feral birds observed along the Atlantic coast (Bohlen 1978).

The Society's field trip to northern Chautauqua County on the 8<sup>th</sup> produced an unusual hybrid goose at the Conservation Club in Dunkirk, *Chautauqua*. It was purported to be a Canada Goose x Greylag Goose x unknown hybrid. Gerry Lazarczyk's details are as follows: "The body from mid-neck down was that of

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mirthful thoughts of an early spring...(Meteorological data from the National Weather Service web site: [http://www.erh.noaa.gov/bufclimate\\_information.htm](http://www.erh.noaa.gov/bufclimate_information.htm))

For waterbirds, the open waters of Dunkirk Harbor, *Chautauqua* are an oasis of sorts in the icy desert that is the



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a Greylag Goose", size, "approximately twice that of nearby Canada Geese", and a "darkish head with a lightish (Canada Goose) chin strap, with brownish speckling on the white neck." Unusual waterfowl such as this often stimulates debate as to origin, yet despite suspicion, this bird is nonetheless interesting.

Common Redpolls are welcome incur-sives to our study area, with scattered reports adding spice to the birding mix in February. The keen observer that scours flocks of these winged sprites from the far north is occasionally rewarded with the niveous close-relative, Hoary Redpoll. Gail Seamans was fortunate to observe 2 individuals of this species at his feeding station in the

Loucks 1996). This increase in breeding pairs is reflected in the number of migrants observed, most notably at Franklin Mountain, *Delaware*, near Oneonta, New York, where 204 Golden Eagles passed in the autumn of 2003, a 32% increase in 10 years (HMANA Raptors Online, 2003). However, despite this increase, in addition to several recent winter records from Allegany State Park, Golden Eagles remain very rare winter visitants to our region. Perhaps additional fieldwork in the southern tier in the future will yield additional reports of this regal bird.

Common Ravens are occasionally reported away from their stronghold in Cattaraugus, Allegany and Wyoming Counties. An individual of this species observed on the 26<sup>th</sup> by Jim Landau in Sardinia represents a rare *Erie* County record for this, our largest Corvid. Landau was alerted to the bird by "a distinct croaking vocalization overhead" and noted "a large, completely black bird...soaring in gradual circles." with "broad wings" and "wide and spatulate" tail.

Although the status of Saw-whet Owl in our region still remains somewhat under-determined, we are slowly gaining additional insight to the seasonal distribution of these forest denizens. Chuck Rosenberg noted 3 individuals of this species on the 18<sup>th</sup> at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Rosenberg *et al* also reported 1 individual on the 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Town of Cambria, *Niagara* and another bird on the same date at the Tuscarora Indian Reservation. In the Town of Porter, *Niagara* on February 29<sup>th</sup>, one Saw-whet Owl, also was reported by Rosenberg.

Other interesting reports received for February include a Red-shouldered Hawk observed by Len DeFrancisco in the Town of Ellicott, *Chautauqua*; several impressive counts of Snow Buntings, including 300 observed by Bob Andrlé on the 7<sup>th</sup> at Times Beach in Buffalo and 300 observed by Peter Yoerg along Niagara-Orleans Townline Road on the 9<sup>th</sup>. An Eastern Towhee observed by Fran Rew and Barbara Walker at the Dunkirk Airport, *Chautauqua* on the 1<sup>st</sup> represents an unusual winter record. Finally, the Snowy Owl observed on the 1<sup>st</sup> by the O'Donnells at the Niagara Falls Airport is especially noteworthy in this non-irruptive season

Town of Bennington, *Wyoming* from the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup>. Although this writer is lacking details of his report, it has come to my attention that documentation has been submitted.

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, Tim Baird took note of a very large, dark bird perched in a tree near Route 280, not far from Holt Run in Allegany State Park, *Cattaraugus*. Baird also described dark underwing linings and axillaries that lacked any light-coloration. He identified the bird as an adult Golden Eagle, a species he has observed on several occasions in winter in the southern tier, including a bird seen in the same area during the winter of 2003. Since the early 1990s, the number of Golden Eagles observed at various eastern hawk watches has increased steadily and although active eyries remain very rare in the northeastern United States, the number of Golden Eagles breeding in the eastern Hudson Bay region of northern Quebec and to the east in Labrador has apparently increased (Nye &



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* Red-throated Loon	1	1	<u>Dunkirk Harbor</u>	Rew, Walker
"	15	1	Ft. Niagara	Yoerg, Henderson
Pied-billed Grebe	8	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
Horned Grebe	1	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
"	8; 18	2; 16	Dunkirk Harbor; Shadi- gee	Watson (BOS), Watson
Red-necked Grebe	1	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
"	1	16	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	5	11	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	7	6	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	8	11	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson (BOS)
D.-crested Cormorant	8	49	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
Great Blue Heron	5; 7	6; 2	Motor I.	Watson
"	5	4	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	9	3	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23; 27	21; 14	Motor I.	Watson
"	29	2	Dayton	Yoerg, Henderson
Turkey Vulture	<u>8F</u>	1	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	28; 29	1; 1	Hamburg; Pomfret	D'Anna et al; Moshers
* Snow Goose	13F; 14	2	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk, VanderHeite
Mute Swan	1	2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	8	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
"	8	<u>1 imm</u> , 11 ad	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	22	2; 2	Newfane; Pt. Breeze	S&T O'Donnell
Tundra Swan	5; 23	64; 29	Beaver I. SP; Motor I.	Watson
"	15	30	Buckhorn I. SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	18; 27	76; 135	Beaver I. SP	Hess; Watson
* Wood Duck	27F	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
* Gadwall	27F	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
American Wigeon	27	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
Northern Pintail	1	1	Wilson	Pawlicki, D'Anna, DiTo- mmaso
"	5	1	Tonawanda	Watson
"	15	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
Canvasback	3; 4; 7	3000; 300; 1000	Grand I.	Lazarczyk
Redhead	5; 27	1; 2	Tonawanda; Strawberry I.	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	5	7	Strawberry I.	Watson
"	5	1	Squaw I.	Yoerg



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* <u>Tufted Duck</u>	5	1	Welland Canal, Ont.	Lazarczyk et al
" (possible escape)	6	1	Welland Canal, Ont.	Landon, Yonker, Hannah
Greater Scaup	5; 27	7; 105	Tonawanda; Ft. Erie	Watson
"	20	300	Grand I.	Lazarczyk
White-winged Scoter	1	5	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	5	10	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	7	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	18	70	Somerset	Watson
Long-tailed Duck	1	50	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
Bufflehead	27	810	Ft. Erie	Watson
Common Goldeneye	27	560	Ft. Erie	Watson
Hooded Merganser	5	2	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	8	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
Common Merganser	5	180	Tonawanda	Watson
"	29	14	Allegheny Reservoir	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-br. Merganser	18; 27	120; 285	Somerset; Ft. Erie	Watson
Ruddy Duck	<u>8</u>	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson (BOS)
Bald Eagle	1	4 recs; 2 max	Niagara R.	Several observers
"	2	1 ad	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	5 - 27	8 recs; 6 max	Motor I; Strawberry I; Tonawanda	Watson
"	5 - 29	4 recs; 8 max	Strawberry I.	Several observers
"	8	1 imm	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
"	12; 15; 27	1 ad; 1 ad; 1 imm	Ripley; Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	14	1 imm	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk
"	18	4	Grand I, Navy I.	Hess
"	22	2	Lewiston	S&T O'Donnell
"	23	1	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1	Royalton	S&T O'Donnell
"	15; 17; 22	6; 1; 1	Ellington	DeFrancisco, Feliciano
"	17; 24	1; 1	Farmersville	DeSha
"	23	1	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
"	29	4	Porter	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenburg et al
* <u>Golden Eagle</u>	8	1	Allegheny SP	Baird
Merlin	<u>1</u>	1	Somerset	D'Anna et al
"	<u>2</u> - <u>24</u>	7 recs; 6 max	UB south campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	<u>14</u>	1	Buffalo	J&K Landau
* Killdeer	29F	1	Hamburg	D'Anna et al
Iceland Gull	8	1	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	22	1	Lakeside Beach SP	Yoerg, Henderson
* Lesser Black-b. Gull	8	1	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	22	1	Beaver I. SP	D'Anna
Glaucous Gull	8	1	Port Weller, Ont.	D'Anna
"	15	1	Ft. Niagara	Yoerg, Henderson
* Great Horned Owl	22; 26	1(nest)	Yates	S&T O'Donnell; Lazarc- zyk
Snowy Owl	1	1	Niagara Falls Airport	S&T O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl	22	4	Porter	S&T O'Donnell



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	29	9	Porter	O'Donnells, Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenberg et al
* Nor. Saw-whet Owl	18	3	Iroquois NWR	Rosenburg
"	23	1; 1	Cambria; Tuscarora IR	D'Anna, Potter, Rosenberg
"	29	1	Porter	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenberg et al
Northern Shrike	10	1	Stockton	Moshers
"	14	1	Somerset	J&K Landau
"	16	5	Pt. Breeze to Somerset	D'Anna, Pawlicki
"	21	1	Iroquois NWR	Lazarczyk (Audubon)
"	22	1; 1	Pendleton; Lakeside Beach SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	1	Joseph Davis SP	S&T O'Donnell
"	23	1	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
Common Raven	23	4	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
"	26	1	<u>Sardinia</u>	J Landau
Horned Lark	1	52	Farmersville	DeSha
"	18	12; 22	Royalton; Hartland	Watson
"	23	67	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
<u>E. a. alpestris</u>	9	50	Newstead	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	50	Somerset	J&K Landau
<u>E. a. praticola</u>	9	50	Shelby	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	6	Somerset	J&K Landau
Carolina Wren	1 - 29	2	South Wales	Bee
"	18	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Golden-cr. Kinglet	15	2	Sardinia	J&K Landau
Eastern Bluebird	10	4	Pomfret	Moshers
"	21	2	Iroquois NWR	Lazarczyk (Audubon)
Northern Mockingbird	1	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	2	Somerset	Yoerg, Henderson
* Yellow-r. Warbler	29	3	Tuscarora IR	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenberg
* Eastern Towhee	1	1	Dunkirk Airport	Rew, Walker
"	18	1	Somerset	Watson
White-thr. Sparrow	18	6	Somerset	Watson
"	19	5	Iroquois NWR	Rosenburg
"	28	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Bogacki, Andrie
Lapland Longspur	1	25; 3	Yates; Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	8	7	Porter	S&T O'Donnell
"	9	2; 8	Newstead; Shelby	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	1	Somerset	J&K Landau
Snow Bunting	8	250	Pomfret	Watson, Miga (BOS)
"	8	30	Sheridan	Watson, Lazarczyk, Pawlicki
"	9	100; 300	Newstead; Niagara-Orleans County Line Rd.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	200	Somerset	J&K Landau
"	15; 17	40; 30	Lyndon; Freedom	DeSha
"	22	200; 300	Yates; Niagara-Orleans County Line Rd.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23	10	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
Red-w. Blackbird	4F; 7	1; 2	South Park, Bflo.	Rew



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	16	1 (f)	Clarence	Pawlicki, D'Anna
"	21	1 (f)	Wheatfield	D'Anna, Potter
* Common Grackle	28F	2	Hamburg	D'Anna
"	29	1	Tonawanda	Watson
"	29	2	Tonawanda	Hess
"	29	1	Porter	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenberg et al
"	29	1	Springville	Yoerg, Henderson
Brown-headed Cowbird	7; 28F; 29	2; 1; 1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	16	1	Clarence	Pawlicki, D'Anna
"	17	5	Tonawanda	Watson
Common Redpoll	1 - 29	30 (f)	Bennington	Seamans
"	9; 22	1; 4	Colden	K Landau
"	9; 22	4; 4(f)	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Morgante
Pine Siskin	22	10	Colden	J&K Landau
"	22 - 24	4 (f)	Bennington	Seamans
"	23	1	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
"	28	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Morgante
"	29	6; 2(f)	Allegany SP; Napoli	Yoerg, Henderson

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year: 107**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month: 013**

**Total for the year 2004: 120**

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## Birding Quiz

*By Mike Morgante*

This month's quiz is about the five regularly occurring thrushes present during spring migration in western New York. Songs and calls can be very helpful for identification, but for this quiz you must rely on field marks alone.

Questions:

Match thrush species with the appropriate field mark:

- 1) This species has lightest breast spotting of the five.
- 2) This species typically has a buffy face.
- 3) This species is the largest of the five.
- 4) This species has a plain grayish face.
- 5) This species has a reddish tail.

Match:

- A) Wood Thrush
- B) Veery
- C) Gray-cheeked Thrush
- D) Swainson's Thrush
- E) Hermit Thrush

Questions for those who breezed through the match:

- 1) Which of these five species do not breed in WNY?
- 2) Which species has the whitest belly?
- 3) Which is the first species to arrive in spring?
- 4) Which is typically the last species to arrive in spring?
- 5) Which species is not a "*Catharus*" thrush?

Birding Quiz Answer

Match:

1-B, 2-D, 3-A, 4-C, 5-E

Answers to Extra Questions:

- 1) Only the Gray-cheeked Thrush is a non-breeder.
- 2) Veery.
- 3) Hermit Thrush.
- 4) Gray-cheeked Thrush.
- 5) Wood Thrush.



## Northern Chautauqua County Field Trip

*by Bill Watson*

Eighteen field trip participants met at Dunkirk Pier on February 8 at 9:00 AM for the Northern Chautauqua County Field Trip led by Dick Miga. The day was clear and sunny with temperatures between 20 and 28 °F and with 25 mph west winds making it feel much colder. A mist was rising from the lake's warmer water that made identification of distant waterfowl a challenge. Here we found an adult Mute Swan, American Coot, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, and Mallards.

At the Conservation Club (end of Mullet Street) there were Canada Goose, Mallard, Red-necked Grebe, Canvasback, and a unidentified loon species far out on the water.

Along Lake Front Avenue there were nine American Black Ducks. An immature Bald Eagle perched on a large high ice mound and surveyed the area.

Dick Miga then took the trip on a tour of the surrounding area, which was highlighted by three Wild Turkeys and an impressive blizzard of about three hundred Snow Buntings on Hall Road. The trip officially broke-up at the Dunkirk Airport, but many participants continued birding.

A flock of about forty Snow Buntings were observed gathering grit on the shoulder of Middle Road, allowing very close looks. On returning to Dunkirk Harbor the earlier mist had cleared and an grand total of twelve Red-necked Grebes were counted, as well as a pair of Ruddy Ducks, exceptionally rare in February, and seven Hooded Mergansers. Walking the shoreline of the harbor from the Ramada Inn to the Conservation Club Jim Pawlicki counted nine Pied-billed Grebes. In conclusion, the trip was a welcome respite from the doldrums of midwinter's cabin fever.

## Niagara County Owl Field Trip

*by Chuck Rosenberg*

Despite a couple periods of soaking rain, a hardy group of birders succeeded in recording five species of owls on the Buffalo Ornithological Society Niagara County owl trip on March 7. We viewed a Great Horned Owl on-nest in Sanborn and had an up-close look at a Northern Saw-whet owl at 4-Mile Creek SP (found earlier in the week by Betsy Potter). After a second round of showers passed through the region in the late afternoon, we were able to watch at least 4

Short-eared Owls and 9 Northern Harriers hunt the fields near Dickersonville and Youngstown Roads in Porter. After dark, we traveled to Bond Lake County Park where we were able to call in a pair of Eastern Screech Owls. They perched side-by-side, the male giving a low pitched trill while the female occasionally offering a higher pitched trill. Several minutes of Barred Owl playback tape finally yielded responses from a single individual. It gradually moved within a several hundred yards, but wouldn't venture closer. A Great Horned Owl also called a couple times while we were at the park. A possible Snowy Owl was observed at the Niagara Falls Airport, in an area where an adult female was seen the day previous. The long distance to the bird combined with moderate rainfall to make verification difficult.

Other noteworthy sightings during the trip included 12 Tundra Swans, 2 Ring-necked Pheasants, 2 Mockingbirds, a group of White-throated Sparrows, several Red-tailed Hawks, and American Kestrel.

## Likely Record-Setting Recovery of Shorebird Banded 20 Years Ago

May 20, 2004 -- A shorebird that turned up near Jacksonville, Florida last Friday is creating a buzz in the international ornithological community. The bird, a Red Knot, which had been banded 20 years earlier in Lagoa do Peixe in southern Brazil, is very likely the oldest shorebird on record.

"Absolutely amazing" were the words of Brian Harrington, a senior scientist at Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences ([www.manomet.org](http://www.manomet.org)), who led the research team that first banded the bird in Brazil more than 20 years ago. According to Harrington, Patrick and Doris Leary discovered the banded bird while conducting shorebird surveys from Florida's Bird Islands to Fort George Inlet. The Leary's reported sighting a knot with "a strange gray-colored marker" to Harrington by email, who was able to confirm through photos that this bird was one banded by his team in 1984. At the time of banding the bird was already an adult, so Harrington has been able to conclude that the bird is at least 21 years old.

This bird has "clocked" almost 400,000 migration miles over the course of its lifetime. "It is a champion migrant," Harrington said, noting that even though this species is known for its remarkable flights, this particular bird has an exceptional story. For the full article go to: <http://www.manomet.org/WHSRN/redknot-story.htm>



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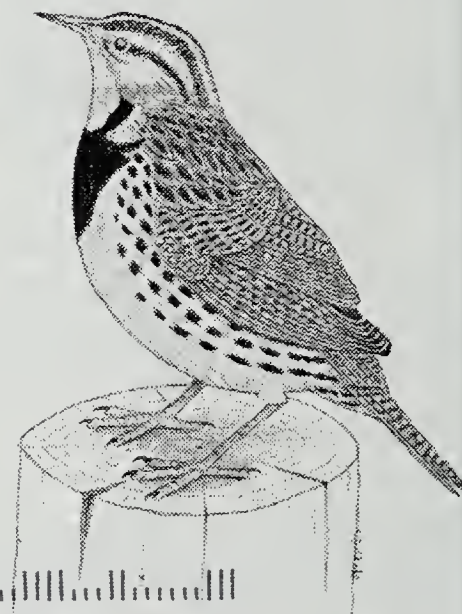
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## April – May Calendar

BOS website

<http://www.bosbirding.org/>



**Buffalo-Niagara Region**  
**Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271**

**March through August** BOS members are encouraged to participate in the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche (drosche@juno.com/652 8409).

**May 26: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Art Clark will present a behind the scenes tour of the museum's vertebrate zoology collections with emphasis on birds.

**May 30: Sunday. Natureview Park.** Leader: Jim Pawlicki (Animalkid10@aol.com or 636-3915). Meet 7:30 AM in the Amherst Archery Parking lot, located on the north side of North French Road, between Sweet Home Road and Campbell Boulevard. Look for the Amherst Archery sign on the north side of the road, and follow the dirt road north to the Archery parking lot.

**June 4-6: Great Adirondack Birding Festival.** Contact Mike Galas.

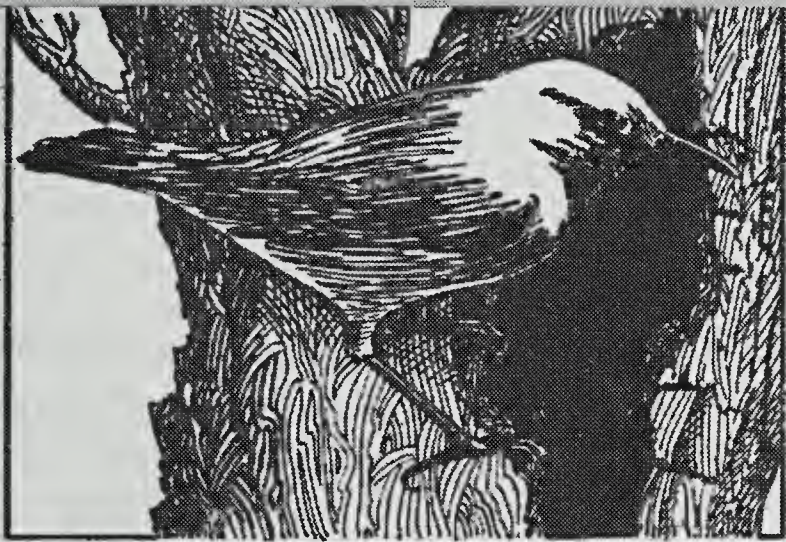
**June 9: BOS Picnic at 6:00 PM.** Tiff Nature Preserve. Bring your dinner.

**June 11: Friday. Canadian Whip-poor-will Trip** and Chinese Dinner. Leader: Bill Burch (773-3690). Meet at Vermont and Busti at 6:00 PM. Dinner at Lotus Garden Restaurant (182 West Street - west bank of Welland Canal, Port Colborne, Ontario) Then we will go to Wilson Road, four miles west of town.

**June 19: Saturday. Carlton Hill.** Leader: Kurt Fox kfox@eznet.net Meet at 7:30 AM at the Alexander Post Office parking lot on Route 98 just south of Route 20 (Broadway). The hills of Wyoming County offer a great diversity of breeding birds. Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area has over 2,580 acres of prime wildlife habitat and over 110 species of birds having been recorded as breeders in the most recent atlas project. Target species include: up to fifteen species of breeding warblers, Acadian and Alder Flycatchers, Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrows, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hermit Thrush, Purple Finch, and Blue-headed Vireo. Possible Common Raven and Henslow's Sparrow. Be prepared for a moderate-length hike (or two) through easy-to-moderately-steep terrain. Bring boots, water, and snack/lunch.



# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: February

by Michael Turisk

Meteorologically speaking, February 2004 was rather uneventful with few extremes. For winter-weary birders, February brought a welcome break from the Hyperborean weather of January. The month began seasonably cold, moderated slightly, then dropped into a brief, albeit sharp cold wave in mid-month, with the only sub-zero temperature occurring on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The average temperature of 25.5 °F was only 0.4 °F below average. Even in this, our driest month, precipitation was meager at only 1.15 inches, which was less than half the usual amount. It was the 8<sup>th</sup> driest February in the 61 years of record at the Buffalo Airport. In addition, snowfall was scant at only 5.9 inches, nearly one-third the norm and the 6<sup>th</sup> least in Buffalo weather annals. The 2.4 inches that fell on the 21<sup>st</sup> was the only appreciable snowfall of the month. Although there was snow cover throughout the period, by month's end only 1 inch remained from the 14 inches measured on the 1<sup>st</sup>. February was also a relatively bright month with 44 per cent of possible sunshine received. The final four days of the month experienced 98 per cent sunshine, incandescent and

norm for Lake Erie in February. On the 1<sup>st</sup>, Fran Rew and Barbara Walker observed a Red-throated Loon at the harbor. Rew noted the "typical loon shape, its long body riding low on the water...the bill was slender as compared to bill of Common Loon. Upper mandible was straight and the lower mandible curved upward..." Although Red-throated Loons make regular passage on Lake Ontario, records from other locales, including Lake Erie, are noteworthy, especially in winter.

Over the last several years, I have enjoyed Peter Yoerg's fascinating accounts of UB's Main Street Merlins. Yoerg has done an admirable job of documenting these birds, including the 6 observed at UB on the 12<sup>th</sup>. A single Merlin observed feeding on an unidentified bird at Somerset, *Niagara* on the 1<sup>st</sup> by D'Anna *et al*, though not unprecedented, is certainly noteworthy.

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, Lynne Landon, Art Hannah and Terry Yonker observed a drake Tufted Duck below Lock #1 at the Welland Canal, Ontario, Canada. This *Aythya* was described as being the "Size and shape of Lesser Scaup only head more rounded and with obvious tuft on back of head." The origins of some Tufted Ducks in North America remains in question; however, it is believed that numbers migrate from Iceland to North America along with Greater Scaup, with the majority of these supposed feral birds observed along the Atlantic coast (Bohlen 1978).

The Society's field trip to northern Chautauqua County on the 8<sup>th</sup> produced an unusual hybrid goose at the Conservation Club in Dunkirk, *Chautauqua*. It was purported to be a Canada Goose x Greylag Goose x unknown hybrid. Gerry Lazarczyk's details are as follows: "The body from mid-neck down was that of

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mirthful thoughts of an early spring...(Meteorological data from the National Weather Service web site: [http://www.erh.noaa.gov/bufclimate\\_information.htm](http://www.erh.noaa.gov/bufclimate_information.htm))

For waterbirds, the open waters of Dunkirk Harbor, *Chautauqua* are an oasis of sorts in the icy desert that is the



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a Greylag Goose", size, "approximately twice that of nearby Canada Geese", and a "darkish head with a lightish (Canada Goose) chin strap, with brownish speckling on the white neck." Unusual waterfowl such as this often stimulates debate as to origin, yet despite suspicion, this bird is nonetheless interesting.

Common Redpolls are welcome incur-sives to our study area, with scattered reports adding spice to the birding mix in February. The keen observer that scours flocks of these winged sprites from the far north is occasionally rewarded with the niveous close-relative, Hoary Redpoll. Gail Seamans was fortunate to observe 2 individuals of this species at his feeding station in the

Loucks 1996). This increase in breeding pairs is reflected in the number of migrants observed, most notably at Franklin Mountain, *Delaware*, near Oneonta, New York, where 204 Golden Eagles passed in the autumn of 2003, a 32% increase in 10 years (HMANA Raptors Online, 2003). However, despite this increase, in addition to several recent winter records from Allegany State Park, Golden Eagles remain very rare winter visitants to our region. Perhaps additional fieldwork in the southern tier in the future will yield additional reports of this regal bird.

Common Ravens are occasionally reported away from their stronghold in Cattaraugus, Allegany and Wyoming Counties. An individual of this species observed on the 26<sup>th</sup> by Jim Landau in Sardinia represents a rare *Erie* County record for this, our largest Corvid. Landau was alerted to the bird by "a distinct croaking vocalization overhead" and noted "a large, completely black bird...soaring in gradual circles." with "broad wings" and "wide and spatulate" tail.

Although the status of Saw-whet Owl in our region still remains somewhat under-determined, we are slowly gaining additional insight to the seasonal distribution of these forest denizens. Chuck Rosenberg noted 3 individuals of this species on the 18<sup>th</sup> at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Rosenberg *et al* also reported 1 individual on the 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Town of Cambria, *Niagara* and another bird on the same date at the Tuscarora Indian Reservation. In the Town of Porter, *Niagara* on February 29<sup>th</sup>, one Saw-whet Owl, also was reported by Rosenberg.

Other interesting reports received for February include a Red-shouldered Hawk observed by Len DeFrancisco in the Town of Ellicott, *Chautauqua*; several impressive counts of Snow Buntings, including 300 observed by Bob Andrie on the 7<sup>th</sup> at Times Beach in Buffalo and 300 observed by Peter Yoerg along Niagara-Orleans Townline Road on the 9<sup>th</sup>. An Eastern Towhee observed by Fran Rew and Barbara Walker at the Dunkirk Airport, *Chautauqua* on the 1<sup>st</sup> represents an unusual winter record. Finally, the Snowy Owl observed on the 1<sup>st</sup> by the O'Donnells at the Niagara Falls Airport is especially noteworthy in this non-irruptive season

Town of Bennington, *Wyoming* from the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup>. Although this writer is lacking details of his report, it has come to my attention that documentation has been submitted.

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, Tim Baird took note of a very large, dark bird perched in a tree near Route 280, not far from Holt Run in Allegany State Park, *Cattaraugus*. Baird also described dark underwing linings and axillaries that lacked any light-coloration. He identified the bird as an adult Golden Eagle, a species he has observed on several occasions in winter in the southern tier, including a bird seen in the same area during the winter of 2003. Since the early 1990s, the number of Golden Eagles observed at various eastern hawk watches has increased steadily and although active eyries remain very rare in the northeastern United States, the number of Golden Eagles breeding in the eastern Hudson Bay region of northern Quebec and to the east in Labrador has apparently increased (Nye &



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* Red-throated Loon	1	1	<u>Dunkirk Harbor</u>	Rew, Walker
"	15	1	Ft. Niagara	Yoerg, Henderson
Pied-billed Grebe	8	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
Horned Grebe	1	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
"	8; 18	2; 16	Dunkirk Harbor; Shadi- gee	Watson (BOS), Watson
Red-necked Grebe	1	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Rew, Walker
"	1	16	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	5	11	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	7	6	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	8	11	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson (BOS)
D.-crested Cormorant	8	49	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
Great Blue Heron	5; 7	6; 2	Motor I.	Watson
"	5	4	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	9	3	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23; 27	21; 14	Motor I.	Watson
"	29	2	Dayton	Yoerg, Henderson
Turkey Vulture	<u>8F</u>	1	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	28; 29	1; 1	Hamburg; Pomfret	D'Anna et al; Moshers
* Snow Goose	13F; 14	2	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk, VanderHeite
Mute Swan	1	2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	8	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
"	8	<u>1 imm</u> , 11 ad	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	22	2; 2	Newfane; Pt. Breeze	S&T O'Donnell
Tundra Swan	5; 23	64; 29	Beaver I. SP; Motor I.	Watson
"	15	30	Buckhorn I. SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	18; 27	76; 135	Beaver I. SP	Hess; Watson
* Wood Duck	27F	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
* Gadwall	27F	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
American Wigeon	27	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
Northern Pintail	1	1	Wilson	Pawlicki, D'Anna, DiTo- mmaso
"	5	1	Tonawanda	Watson
"	15	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
Canvasback	3; 4; 7	3000; 300; 1000	Grand I.	Lazarczyk
Redhead	5; 27	1; 2	Tonawanda; Strawberry I.	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	5	7	Strawberry I.	Watson
"	5	1	Squaw I.	Yoerg



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* <u>Tufted Duck</u>	5	1	Welland Canal, Ont.	Lazarczyk et al
" (possible escape)	6	1	Welland Canal, Ont.	Landon, Yonker, Hannah
Greater Scaup	5; 27	7; 105	Tonawanda; Ft. Erie	Watson
"	20	300	Grand I.	Lazarczyk
White-winged Scoter	1	5	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	5	10	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	7	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	18	70	Somerset	Watson
Long-tailed Duck	1	50	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
Bufflehead	27	810	Ft. Erie	Watson
Common Goldeneye	27	560	Ft. Erie	Watson
Hooded Merganser	5	2	Squaw I.	Yoerg
"	8	7	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
Common Merganser	5	180	Tonawanda	Watson
"	29	14	Allegheny Reservoir	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-br. Merganser	18; 27	120; 285	Somerset; Ft. Erie	Watson
Ruddy Duck	8	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson (BOS)
Bald Eagle	1	4 recs; 2 max	Niagara R.	Several observers
"	2	1 ad	Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	5 - 27	8 recs; 6 max	Motor I; Strawberry I; Tonawanda	Watson
"	5 - 29	4 recs; 8 max	Strawberry I.	Several observers
"	8	1 imm	Dunkirk Harbor	Watson, Miga (BOS)
"	12; 15; 27	1 ad; 1 ad; 1 imm	Ripley; Westfield	DeFrancisco
"	14	1 imm	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk
"	18	4	Grand I, Navy I.	Hess
"	22	2	Lewiston	S&T O'Donnell
"	23	1	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1	Royalton	S&T O'Donnell
"	15; 17; 22	6; 1; 1	Ellington	DeFrancisco, Feliciano
"	17; 24	1; 1	Farmersville	DeSha
"	23	1	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
"	29	4	Porter	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenberg et al
* <u>Golden Eagle</u>	8	1	Allegheny SP	Baird
Merlin	<u>1</u>	1	Somerset	D'Anna et al
"	<u>2 - 24</u>	7 recs; 6 max	UB south campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	<u>14</u>	1	Buffalo	J&K Landau
* Killdeer	29F	1	Hamburg	D'Anna et al
Iceland Gull	8	1	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	22	1	Lakeside Beach SP	Yoerg, Henderson
* Lesser Black-b. Gull	8	1	Ft. Erie	D'Anna
"	22	1	Beaver I. SP	D'Anna
Glaucous Gull	8	1	Port Weller, Ont.	D'Anna
"	15	1	Ft. Niagara	Yoerg, Henderson
* Great Horned Owl	22; 26	1(nest)	Yates	S&T O'Donnell; Lazarc- zyk
Snowy Owl	1	1	Niagara Falls Airport	S&T O'Donnell
Short-eared Owl	22	4	Porter	S&T O'Donnell



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	29	9	Porter	O'Donnells, Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenberg et al
* Nor. Saw-whet Owl	18	3	Iroquois NWR	Rosenburg
"	23	1; 1	Cambria; Tuscarora IR	D'Anna, Potter, Rosenburg
"	29	1	Porter	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenburg et al
Northern Shrike	10	1	Stockton	Moshers
"	14	1	Somerset	J&K Landau
"	16	5	Pt. Breeze to Somerset	D'Anna, Pawlicki
"	21	1	Iroquois NWR	Lazarczyk (Audubon)
"	22	1; 1	Pendleton; Lakeside Beach SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	1	Joseph Davis SP	S&T O'Donnell
"	23	1	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
Common Raven	23	4	Allegheny Reservoir	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
"	26	1	<u>Sardinia</u>	J Landau
Horned Lark	1	52	Farmersville	DeSha
"	18	12; 22	Royalton; Hartland	Watson
"	23	67	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
<u>E. a. alpestris</u>	9	50	Newstead	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	50	Somerset	J&K Landau
<u>E. a. praticola</u>	9	50	Shelby	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	6	Somerset	J&K Landau
Carolina Wren	1 - 29	2	South Wales	Bee
"	18	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Golden-cr. Kinglet	15	2	Sardinia	J&K Landau
Eastern Bluebird	10	4	Pomfret	Moshers
"	21	2	Iroquois NWR	Lazarczyk (Audubon)
Northern Mockingbird	1	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	2	Somerset	Yoerg, Henderson
* Yellow-r. Warbler	29	3	Tuscarora IR	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenburg
* Eastern Towhee	1	1	Dunkirk Airport	Rew, Walker
"	18	1	Somerset	Watson
White-thr. Sparrow	18	6	Somerset	Watson
"	19	5	Iroquois NWR	Rosenburg
"	28	1	Tiffit NP	Watson, Bogacki, Andrie
Lapland Longspur	1	25; 3	Yates; Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	8	7	Porter	S&T O'Donnell
"	9	2; 8	Newstead; Shelby	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	1	Somerset	J&K Landau
Snow Bunting	8	250	Pomfret	Watson, Miga (BOS)
"	8	30	Sheridan	Watson, Lazarczyk, Pawlicki
"	9	100; 300	Newstead; Niagara-Orleans County Line Rd.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	200	Somerset	J&K Landau
"	15; 17	40; 30	Lyndon; Freedom	DeSha
"	22	200; 300	Yates; Niagara-Orleans County Line Rd.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23	10	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
Red-w. Blackbird	4F; 7	1; 2	South Park, Bflo.	Rew



<u>Species</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
“	16	1 (f)	Clarence	Pawlicki, D’Anna
“	21	1 (f)	Wheatfield	D’Anna, Potter
* Common Grackle	28F	2	Hamburg	D’Anna
“	29	1	Tonawanda	Watson
“	29	2	Tonawanda	Hess
“	29	1	Porter	Pawlicki, Sly, Rosenberg et al
“	29	1	Springville	Yoerg, Henderson
Brown-headed Cowbird	7; 28F; 29	2; 1; 1	Tonawanda	Hess
“	16	1	Clarence	Pawlicki, D’Anna
“	17	5	Tonawanda	Watson
Common Redpoll	1 - 29	30 (f)	Bennington	Seamans
“	9; 22	1; 4	Colden	K Landau
“	9; 22	4; 4(f)	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
“	28	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Morgante
Pine Siskin	22	10	Colden	J&K Landau
“	22 - 24	4 (f)	Bennington	Seamans
“	23	1	Conewango	DeSha, Baird, LeBlanc
“	28	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Morgante
“	29	6; 2(f)	Allegany SP; Napoli	Yoerg, Henderson

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year: 107**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month: 013**

**Total for the year 2004: 120**

**Statisticians’ Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## Birding Quiz

*By Mike Morgante*

This month’s quiz is about the five regularly occurring thrushes present during spring migration in western New York. Songs and calls can be very helpful for identification, but for this quiz you must rely on field marks alone.

Questions:

Match thrush species with the appropriate field mark:

- 1) This species has lightest breast spotting of the five.
- 2) This species typically has a buffy face.
- 3) This species is the largest of the five.
- 4) This species has a plain grayish face.
- 5) This species has a reddish tail.

Match:

- A) Wood Thrush
- B) Veery
- C) Gray-cheeked Thrush
- D) Swainson’s Thrush
- E) Hermit Thrush

Questions for those who breezed through the match:

- 1) Which of these five species do not breed in WNY?
- 2) Which species has the whitest belly?
- 3) Which is the first species to arrive in spring?
- 4) Which is typically the last species to arrive in spring?
- 5) Which species is not a “*Catharus*” thrush?

Birding Quiz Answer

Match:

1-B, 2-D, 3-A, 4-C, 5-E

Answers to Extra Questions:

- 1) Only the Gray-cheeked Thrush is a non-breeder.
- 2) Veery.
- 3) Hermit Thrush.
- 4) Gray-cheeked Thrush.
- 5) Wood Thrush.



## **Northern Chautauqua County Field Trip**

*by Bill Watson*

Eighteen field trip participants met at Dunkirk Pier on February 8 at 9:00 AM for the Northern Chautauqua County Field Trip led by Dick Miga. The day was clear and sunny with temperatures between 20 and 28 °F and with 25 mph west winds making it feel much colder. A mist was rising from the lake's warmer water that made identification of distant waterfowl a challenge. Here we found an adult Mute Swan, American Coot, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, and Mallards.

At the Conservation Club (end of Mullet Street) there were Canada Goose, Mallard, Red-necked Grebe, Canvasback, and a unidentified loon species far out on the water.

Along Lake Front Avenue there were nine American Black Ducks. An immature Bald Eagle perched on a large high ice mound and surveyed the area.

Dick Miga then took the trip on a tour of the surrounding area, which was highlighted by three Wild Turkeys and an impressive blizzard of about three hundred Snow Buntings on Hall Road. The trip officially broke-up at the Dunkirk Airport, but many participants continued birding.

A flock of about forty Snow Buntings were observed gathering grit on the shoulder of Middle Road, allowing very close looks. On returning to Dunkirk Harbor the earlier mist had cleared and an grand total of twelve Red-necked Grebes were counted, as well as a pair of Ruddy Ducks, exceptionally rare in February, and seven Hooded Mergansers. Walking the shoreline of the harbor from the Ramada Inn to the Conservation Club Jim Pawlicki counted nine Pied-billed Grebes. In conclusion, the trip was a welcome respite from the doldrums of midwinter's cabin fever.

## **Niagara County Owl Field Trip**

*by Chuck Rosenberg*

Despite a couple periods of soaking rain, a hardy group of birders succeeded in recording five species of owls on the Buffalo Ornithological Society Niagara County owl trip on March 7. We viewed a Great Horned Owl on-nest in Sanborn and had an up-close look at a Northern Saw-whet owl at 4-Mile Creek SP (found earlier in the week by Betsy Potter). After a second round of showers passed through the region in the late afternoon, we were able to watch at least 4

Short-eared Owls and 9 Northern Harriers hunt the fields near Dickersonville and Youngstown Roads in Porter. After dark, we traveled to Bond Lake County Park where we were able to call in a pair of Eastern Screech Owls. They perched side-by-side, the male giving a low pitched trill while the female occasionally offering a higher pitched trill. Several minutes of Barred Owl playback tape finally yielded responses from a single individual. It gradually moved within a several hundred yards, but wouldn't venture closer. A Great Horned Owl also called a couple times while we were at the park. A possible Snowy Owl was observed at the Niagara Falls Airport, in an area where an adult female was seen the day previous. The long distance to the bird combined with moderate rainfall to make verification difficult.

Other noteworthy sightings during the trip included 12 Tundra Swans, 2 Ring-necked Pheasants, 2 Mockingbirds, a group of White-throated Sparrows, several Red-tailed Hawks, and American Kestrel.

## **Likely Record-Setting Recovery of Shorebird Banded 20 Years Ago**

May 20, 2004 -- A shorebird that turned up near Jacksonville, Florida last Friday is creating a buzz in the international ornithological community. The bird, a Red Knot, which had been banded 20 years earlier in Lagoa do Peixe in southern Brazil, is very likely the oldest shorebird on record.

"Absolutely amazing" were the words of Brian Harrington, a senior scientist at Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences ([www.manomet.org](http://www.manomet.org)), who led the research team that first banded the bird in Brazil more than 20 years ago. According to Harrington, Patrick and Doris Leary discovered the banded bird while conducting shorebird surveys from Florida's Bird Islands to Fort George Inlet. The Leary's reported sighting a knot with "a strange gray-colored marker" to Harrington by email, who was able to confirm through photos that this bird was one banded by his team in 1984. At the time of banding the bird was already an adult, so Harrington has been able to conclude that the bird is at least 21 years old.

This bird has "clocked" almost 400,000 migration miles over the course of its lifetime. "It is a champion migrant," Harrington said, noting that even though this species is known for its remarkable flights, this particular bird has an exceptional story. For the full article go to: <http://www.manomet.org/WHSRN/redknot-story.htm>



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## April – May Calendar

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Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

**March through August** BOS members are encouraged to participate in the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche (drosche@juno.com/652 8409).

**May 26: BOS Meeting 7:30 PM.** Art Clark will present a behind the scenes tour of the museum's vertebrate zoology collections with emphasis on birds.

**May 30: Sunday. Natureview Park.** Leader: Jim Pawlicki (Animalkid10@aol.com or 636-3915). Meet 7:30 AM in the Amherst Archery Parking lot, located on the north side of North French Road, between Sweet Home Road and Campbell Boulevard. Look for the Amherst Archery sign on the north side of the road, and follow the dirt road north to the Archery parking lot.

**June 4-6: Great Adirondack Birding Festival.** Contact Mike Galas.

**June 9: BOS Picnic at 6:00 PM.** Tifft Nature Preserve. Bring your dinner.

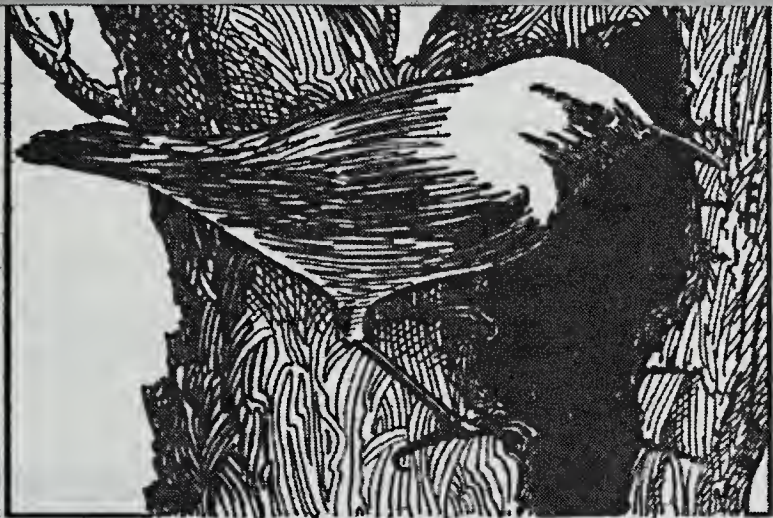
**June 11: Friday. Canadian Whip-poor-will Trip** and Chinese Dinner.

Leader: Bill Burch (773-3690). Meet at Vermont and Busti at 6:00 PM. Dinner at Lotus Garden Restaurant (182 West Street - west bank of Welland Canal, Port Colborne, Ontario) Then we will go to Wilson Road, four miles west of town.

**June 19: Saturday. Carlton Hill.** Leader: Kurt Fox kfox@eznet.net Meet at 7:30 AM at the Alexander Post Office parking lot on Route 98 just south of Route 20 (Broadway). The hills of Wyoming County offer a great diversity of breeding birds. Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area has over 2,580 acres of prime wildlife habitat and over 110 species of birds having been recorded by breeders in the most recent atlas project. Target species include: up to fifty species of breeding warblers, Acadian and Alder Flycatchers, Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrows, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hermit Thrush, Purple Finch, and Blue-headed Vireo. Possible Common Raven and Henslow's Sparrow. Be prepared for a moderate-length hike (or two) through easy-to-moderately-steep terrain. Bring boots, water, and snack/lunch.



# The PROTHONOTARY



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### THE MONTH: March

*by Mike Zebehazy*

March 2004 was the cloudiest on record. The first week featured mostly cloudy conditions every day, but temperatures were quite mild. The mild temperatures ended abruptly on March 8<sup>th</sup> when a series of frequent snowfalls and seasonably cool temperatures began. A large winter storm on the 16<sup>th</sup> brought record snowfall (14 inches) to the entire region. By the 22<sup>nd</sup> much of the snow had melted but the cool conditions remained until the 24<sup>th</sup>. The last week featured seasonably mild temperatures but most days were quite cloudy except for the 29<sup>th</sup> when mostly sunny skies helped the temperature rise to 71° making Buffalo the warmest spot in the Northeast that day.

Early spring migration increased this month with about 22 reports qualifying as first of the migration. Killdeer, Tundra Swan, Red-winged Blackbird, and Common Grackle were reported from several locations in the first week. Early Blue-winged Teal were noted at the Iroquois Refuge. There were several reports of the Richardson's race of Canada Goose. Observers spotted several hundred Snow Geese over Cayuga Pool at Iroquois while reports from the Montezuma Refuge 100 miles to the east and well outside the BOS study area included an estimated 100,000 Snow Geese. Hawk migration was under way with interesting flights at Hamburg and Four Mile Creek State Park and Turkey Vultures were widely reported across the region. By the end of the month a few shorebirds began to arrive and the variety of passerine species increased nicely.

The Hamburg Hawk Watch at Lakeside Cemetery was covered with snow but Bill Watson got lucky again this year when he and Jerry Lazarczyk watched a Black Vulture glide past with a tipping Turkey Vulture on March 22.

Willie D'Anna discovered a Greater White-fronted Goose sleeping in a field on Lower Lake Road in the Town of Yates on the 20<sup>th</sup>. When the bird raised its head D'Anna was able to note the usual field marks as well as dark irises. He ruled out Lesser White-fronted Goose because, for one reason, that species has a yellow eye ring. On March 6<sup>th</sup> Watson recorded nine "Richardson's" Canada Geese in a pond south of Steiner Road in Newstead. Then, on March 7<sup>th</sup> Peter Yoerg and Barbara Henderson spotted ten "Richardson's" Geese in a field on Somerset-Hartland Town-line Road west of Johnson Creek Road. When they returned to the location on the 14<sup>th</sup> 10 birds, presum-



Immature Snow Goose photographed by Willie D'Anna on March 6 near Lake Road in Somerset, NY.

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ably the same ones were still there. At Iroquois March 6<sup>th</sup> Watson had two early male Blue-winged Teal and a couple of hours later, D'Anna found and photographed the same birds. The next day, at a swamp on Berry Road about two miles west of Fredonia, Terry Mosher watched an "elegant little waterfowl" (another early male Blue-winged Teal) as it swam into the cattails. Gallagher's Beach in Buffalo was the location of two male Black Scoters discovered by D'Anna. One was in definitive basic plumage while the other was in first basic plumage.

Ospreys were observed at the Allegany Reservoir, one at the Route 17 bridge, two at different nest platforms, and an immature bird in a tree

north of the marina. According to Watson, these birds, although early, are apparently routine at this location. The Golden Eagle at Four Mile Creek State Park was kettling with several Red-tailed Hawks moving west. Later, an adult and an immature Bald Eagle flew past. Interestingly, three similar eagles went by the Grimsby Hawk Watch later that day.

Regarding the departure of the Merlins at the UB south campus, Yoerg notes that unless one or two show up one last time this would be the earliest they have left during the several years he has been monitoring them at this location.

An exciting find during a BOS field trip led by D'Anna was that of a shrike. Dean DiTommaso suggested it might be a Loggerhead. The bird was well off the road high up in a deciduous tree on Hosmer Road in the Town of Hartland. The rump was grayish, not white like that of a Northern Shrike so by now D'Anna also suspected Loggerhead. To get a closer

look, permission to enter the property was obtained and the bird, which had flown off, was relocated about one hundred yards away. It was studied for about forty-five minutes and most of the significant field marks were noted in detail by both D'Anna and Watson. Later that day a Northern Shrike was discovered and the differences between the two species were pointed out to the group.

Finally, an extensive report of two Pine Warblers, including photos, was submitted by Thomas LeBlanc. They were seen at a feeder behind the administration building in Allegany State Park.



Pine Warbler photographed by Thomas LeBlanc on March 30 at Allegany State Park.

Several significant species were reported to Dial-a-Bird and the geneseebirds listserv on the Web ([geneseebirds-l-request@geneseo.edu](mailto:geneseebirds-l-request@geneseo.edu)), but apparently no follow-up reports were submitted. These include Ross's Goose, Black-headed Gull, Northern Goshawk in a yard in the Town of Wales, and Western Meadowlark. Also from Dial-a-Bird comes the following: Impressive results from an all night search for owls in Wyoming County on March 9 included numbers of Northern Saw-whet Owls, Eastern Screech Owls, Barred Owls and a Long-eared Owl; however, Great Horned Owls were curiously absent.

Thanks to Gerry Rising, David Suggs and those who submitted reports that were used in preparing this article.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	7; 14	1; 1	Ft. Niagara SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	6	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Di Tommaso
Pied-billed Grebe	24F	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Burch (EABC)
"	28	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Horned Grebe	24	2	Buckhorn I. SP	Burch (EABC)
"	27	3	E. Aurora	Holmes
Red-necked Grebe	7; 14	2; 2	Ft. Niagara SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Di Tommaso
Great Blue Heron	29	57	Motor I.	Watson
"	30	47	Motor I.	Burch
Black-cr. Night-Heron	28; 29	2; 2	Motor I.	S&T O'Donnell; Watson
* <u>Black Vulture</u>	22	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson, Lazarczyk et al
Turkey Vulture	24	383	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Chilton et al
"	29	547	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al
<u>Gr. White-fr. Goose</u>	20	1	Yates	D'Anna et al
Snow Goose	6	37	Yates	Potter, D'Anna et al
"	7	2 (blue)	Hartland	Yoerg, Henderson
"	13	<u>1400</u>	Shadigee	D'Anna et al
"	20; 24	37; 47	Alfred	Brooks
"	21	38	Hartland	Watson
"	28	30	E. Aurora	Holmes
C. Goose ( <u>B. c. hutchinsii</u> )	6	9	Newstead	Watson
"	7	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7; 14	10	Hartland	Yoerg, Henderson
Mute Swan	4 - 24	4 repts; 1	Beaver I. SP	Burch
"	10; 31	1; 1	Motor I.; Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	31	1	Iroquois NWR	Burch (EABC)
Tundra Swan	6; 7	56; 56	Machias	DeSha
"	14	80	Hartland	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	200; 50	Iroquois NWR; Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	661	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	20	621	Iroquois NWR	Burch et al
"	21	140	Cambria	D'Anna, Potter
"	24	136	Grand I.	Burch (EABC)
Wood Duck	2; 28	5; 18	Pomfret	Moshers
"	6; 14	2; 4	Newstead	Watson
American Wigeon	31	198	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
* <u>Blue-winged Teal</u>	<u>6F</u>	2	Iroquois NWR	Watson, D'Anna, Di Tommaso
"	<u>7</u>	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Northern Shoveler	6F	3	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna



<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	14; 31	7; 157	Iroquois NWR; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	31	22	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Northern Pintail	6	33; 45	Iroquois NWR	Watson; D'Anna, DiTommaso
"	6	55	Newstead	Watson
"	14	32	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Green-winged Teal	4F	3	Pomfret	Moshers
"	7	16	Hartland	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14; 31	8; 18	Iroquois NWR; Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	6	52	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	6	47	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna, Di Tommaso
"	31	46; 131	Batavia WWTP; Oak Orchard WMA	Watson; Watson
Greater Scaup	31F	16	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Lesser Scaup	31F	88	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Black Scoter	<u>25</u>	2	Buffalo Harbor	D'Anna
Long-tailed Duck	28	5	Freedom	DeSha
Bufflehead	14; 31	3; 42	Tonawanda WMA; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	26	1	Hume	Brooks
"	27	9	E. Aurora	Holmes
Ruddy Duck	31F	40	Batavia WWTP	Watson
* Osprey	<u>25F</u>	4	Allegany Res.	Watson, Lazarczyk
Bald Eagle	4 - 31	7 repts; 5 max	Various locations, WNY	Burch
"	5; 13	1 imm; 1 ad	Yates	Potter; D'Anna et al
"	6	2ad, 1 imm	Iroquois NWR, Tonawanda WMA	Watson
"	6	2	Ripley Hawkwatch	DeFrancisco
"	7	1 ad, 1 imm	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	10	1	Beaver I. SP	Hess
"	13	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Lazarczyk
"	14; 29	2 ad; 3 imm	Iroquois NWR; Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson; Watson, Turisk, et al
"	30	1	Machias	DeSha
"	31	1; 3	Oak Orchard WMA; Iroquois NWR	Watson
Red-shouldered Hawk	7F	2	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	37	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Chilton et al
"	29	16	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al
Red-tailed Hawk	7	150	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	29	56	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al
Rough-legged Hawk	1; 6	2; 2	Hamburg Hawkwatch; Iroquois NWR	Watson et al; Watson
"	7	7	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	9	1	Ischua	DeSha
"	29	4	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al
<u>Golden Eagle</u>	7	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Merlin	<u>19;24;25</u>	5; 1; 1	UB south campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	<u>1</u>	2 ad	Buffalo	Burch



<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	<u>20</u>	1 ad	Yates	D'Anna et al
"	<u>21</u>	1	Shelby	S&T O'Donnell
"	<u>25</u>	1 imm	Buffalo Harbor	D'Anna, Di Tommaso
* Ruffed Grouse	28	1	Colden	J&K Landau
American Coot	31	22	Iroquois NWR	Watson
* Greater Yellowlegs	31F	7	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Soule
* Wilson's Snipe	17F	2	Pomfret	Moshers
* American Woodcock	5F	2	Pomfret	Mosher
"	24	2	Lancaster	Morgante
"	28	3	Alfred	Brooks
Little Gull	27	1	Somerset	D'Anna (BOS)
Lesser Black-b. Gull	20	1	Yates	D'Anna et al
Eastern Screech-Owl	13	1	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk
"	21	1	Oakfield	S&T O'Donnell
"	24	5 recs; 1 max	Inland WNY	Fox, Beattie
* Barred Owl	7	1	Bond Lake CP	Watson et al (BOS)
Long-eared Owl	1	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Potter
"	21	1	Stevensville CA	Lazarczyk
Short-eared Owl	4	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna, Potter
"	7	6	Porter	Watson et al (BOS)
"	13	1	Yates	D'Anna et al
"	13	7	Porter	S&T O'Donnell
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	1; 24	1; 4	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Potter
"	6	3	Four Mile Creek SP	Potter, Rosenberg
"	7	1	Porter	Watson et al (BOS)
* Eastern Phoebe	25F	1; 1	Pomfret; Wheatfield	Moshers; D'Anna, Potter
"	28	1	Colden	J&K Landau
"	28	6	Beaver I. SP	S&T O'Donnell
"	28	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
* <u>Loggerhead Shrike</u>	27	1	Hartland	Watson, Lazarczyk, D'Anna et al (BOS)
Northern Shrike	19	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter
"	27	1	Yates	Watson et al (BOS)
Common Raven	18; 19	1; 2	Alfred; Ward	Brooks
Horned Lark	10	2	Bethany	Beattie
"	21	50	Oakfield	S&T O'Donnell
<u>E. a. alpestris</u>	21	6	Hartland	Watson
<u>E. a. praticola</u>	21	57	Hartland	Watson
* Tree Swallow	27F	9	Somerset to Carlton	D'Anna (BOS)
"	28	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	28	1; 1	Chautauqua; Pomfret	Mosher
"	31	84	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
* Winter Wren	28F	1	Beaver I. SP	S&T O'Donnell
"	30	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Potter
* Ruby-cr. Kinglet	30F	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Potter
Eastern Bluebird	26	2	Hume	Brooks
"	27	1	Bethany	Beattie
Gray Catbird	31F	1	Westfield	DeFrancisco
Northern Mockingbird	7; 29	1; 1	Porter; Hamburg	Watson et al (BOS); Watson
* Pine Warbler	<u>30</u>	2	Allegany SP	LeBlanc
Eastern Towhee	8F	2	Deveaux Woods SP	S O'Donnell



<u>Species</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
“	28	1	Stockton	Mosher
* Savannah Sparrow	31F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
* Swamp Sparrow	28F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
Lapland Longspur	21	2; 2	Yates; Hartland	Watson et al
“	21	3	Oakfield	S&T O'Donnell
Snow Bunting	8; 10	8; 1	Bethany	Beattie
“	21	3	Hartland	Watson et al
“	21	200	Oakfield	S&T O'Donnell
* Eastern Meadowlark	20F	1	Hartland	D'Anna et al
“	24	1	West Valley	Morgante
* Rusty Blackbird	9	2	E. Aurora	Holmes
“	31	4	Pomfret	Mosher
Purple Finch	30	1	Colden	J&K Landau
Common Redpoll	1	40	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al
“	7	6	Four Mile Creek SP	Yoerg, Henderson
“	9 - 24	12 repts; 102 max	Franklinville	DeSha
“	12; 13	2; 2; 50	Colden	K Landau
“	18; 19	2; 2	Alfred; Ward	Brooks
“	25	50	Colden	J Landau
Pine Siskin	7 - 26	10 repts; 4 max	Colden	J&K Landau
“	9 - 31	15 repts; 14 max	Franklinville	DeSha
“	24;28;30	1; 10; 4	Alfred; Ward; Ward	Brooks
American Goldfinch	16; 21	60; 60	Franklinville	DeSha

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year: 120**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month: 018**

**Total for the year 2004: 138**

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.



## Birding Quiz

By Mike Morgante

Western New York birders can regularly see five swallow species in addition to Purple Martin. This month's quiz focuses on the field marks of the five swallows species: Tree, Northern Rough-winged, Bank, Cliff, and Barn. Identification of adults is typically straightforward, however, juveniles or out-of-season birds can sometimes pose difficult identification challenges. This quiz is limited to field marks of adult swallows.

### Questions:

1. Tail shape can be an important ID tool. Of the five species, which two have square tails?
2. Which is the smallest of these five swallow species?
3. Which is the only species of these five to have a contrasting rump color?
4. Which is the only species to have a clean white throat and breast?
5. Which two species often nest colonially as opposed to singly?
6. Describe the primary different field mark that can help distinguish Cave Swallow from the very similar Cliff Swallow? (Cave has made near annual appearances in New York State in recent years)

### Answers:

1. Northern Rough-winged and Cliff have square tails. Barn and Bank have notched tails. Tree has a slight notch.
2. Bank Swallow
3. Cliff Swallow has pale buffy rump that contrasts with the dark body.
4. Tree Swallow
5. Bank Swallow and Cliff Swallow often nest in colonies.
6. Throat color. Cave Swallow has a very pale throat. Cliff Swallow has a dark throat. (Note: Telling the two apart in the field, especially for out-of-season or out-of-range birds requires far more detail than just this one field mark)



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## June – August Calendar

**March through August** BOS members are encouraged to participate in the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche ([drosche@juno.com](mailto:drosche@juno.com) or 716-652-8409).

**July 25: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (716-881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

**August 15: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you have questions or would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker or Lynne Landon at 716-745-9129 or email: [TerryYonker@cs.com](mailto:TerryYonker@cs.com)

**August 29: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds** (Buff-breasted Sandpiper?) and other early migrants. Leader: Mike Hamilton (716-881-6709). Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there.



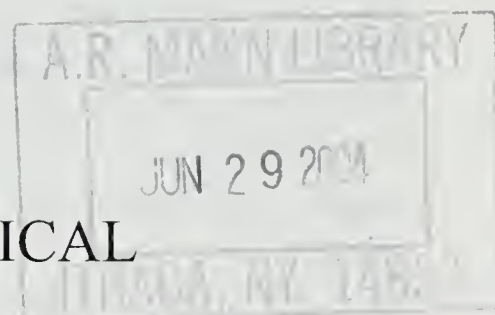
# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 5 May, 2004



### THE MONTH: April

by Bill Watson

Although April 2003 showed a variety of weather across our region, the month was seasonal with slightly warmer temperatures and above normal rainfall. The average temperature was 46.0 °F (0.7 °F above normal) and we received 3.94 inches of melted precipitation (0.90 inches above normal). Most of the 3.3 inches of snow fell on the 4th, when 2.7 inches was recorded at the Buffalo Airport.

The second half of the month contained some unseasonably warm temperatures with the 16-19, 21, 29, and 30th being 10 to 15 degrees warmer than normal with highs ranging from 69 to 76 °F. The first half of the month had only five days with average winds containing a southerly component, while the last half of the month had eleven days with average winds containing a southerly component. The unusually high temperatures provided insects and vegetation necessary to sustain early migrants, while the southerly wind assisted in migration.

These favorable conditions were likely responsible for thirteen reported warbler species in April: Blue-

winged, Nashville, Yellow, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, and Palm Warblers, American Redstart, Northern Waterthrush, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Common Yellowthroat. One must go back to 1994 to find more April warbler species (14) than reported here.

Fourteen written verification records were accepted by the statisticians this month. This is unusually low when compared to respectively, 58, 26, and 23 records in April 2001, 2002, and 2003. Curiously, there were numerous informal reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks prior to the early date of April 29th, however only three of these records were submitted and only one had a written verification record.

The verification records we did receive, contained some excellent early migrant records. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak Verification Report that the statisticians did receive was observed on the 26th in Lancaster. There are only four earlier accepted records.

On April 11th Peter Yeorg documented a bird at Cayuga Pool on the Iroquois NWR, that had the "size and shape" of an American Coot, but had a "fire engine red bill and frontal shield." The only earlier Common Moorhen Noteworthy Records were on April 8, 1975, and April 10, 1949. Common Moorhen also has earlier April Count documentation on the April 10, 1960; April 9, 1966 (three individuals); April 10, 1983; April 10, 1988; April 4, 1993; and April 9, 1993. Note that between 1935 and 2004, 56% of the early records are between 1983 and 2004. The frequency of these early Common Moorhen dates suggests that this species is returning earlier to our region.

At Iroquois Observations on April 24, a Black Tern whose "head, neck (what little there was of it) breast, upper belly, and flanks were an inky black" was observed by the participants of the Audubon Iroquois Observations at Cayuga Pool. There are only three earlier records: April 20, 1960; April 21, 1958; and April 23, 1959. This species was also observed at Iroquois Observation on April 17th, unfortunately a B.O.S. Verification Report was not submitted.

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After being attracted to a "repeated high pitched trill" that Mike Morgante recognized as two competing Pine Warbler songs (rather than that of a Dark-eyed Junco or Chipping Sparrow) he spied a warbler with "yellow on the throat and breast and slightly green streaking on the flanks." This bird on April 2 at Chestnut Ridge Park was observed eleven days before the write up date. Tom LeBlanc finds that the first Pine Warblers regularly return to the Allegany State Park region in late March. Since this species has also shown a sharp increase as a breeder away from the Southern Tier, it should be looked for in these non Southern Tier breeding locations and similar potential breeding habitat in early March. Although

differentiating between wintering birds and early migrants may be problematical, this is certainly a bird whose status is changing in our area.

The early migrant Northern Waterthrush espied at Tiff Nature Preserve March 22 is only exceeded by earlier records: April 19, 1985; April 21, 2002, and a April 20 record (Beardslee and Mitchell 1965) that oddly lacks an observer, location, and year. This species was also seen by at least two different persons on the 21st, but unfortunately a B.O.S. Verification Report was not submitted. A Palm Warbler on the April Count observed by Willie D'Anna in a yard at the intersection of Youngstown-Wilson and Ransomville Roads is bettered by only six earlier records (four from April Counts).

The Hamburg Hawkwatch produced its share of rarities in April. On April 19, Dean DiTommaso discovered a Black Vulture in a small group of soaring Turkey Vultures. He commented that: "Direct size

comparisons with a nearby Turkey Vulture revealed this bird to be somewhat smaller with a much shorter tail and shorter and proportionally broader wings. The bird was in full soar with no apparent dihedral." Dean then discussed other body proportions such as the small head. Too often Verification Reports only focus on plumage rather than the size and shape of the bird. The only other accepted record of a Black Vulture in April was observed by Bill Vaughn and Karen Renning in the Town of Alabama on April 7, 1984. Other interesting records among the 5,861 April raptors and vultures at the Hamburg Hawkwatch: 74 Osprey, 11 Bald Eagles, 42 Northern Harriers, 51 Rough-legged Hawks, 1 Golden Eagle, 4 Merlins, and 2 Peregrine Falcons. Although fewer hours were logged at the Ripley Hawkwatch, they had a total of 13,378 April raptors and vultures: 85 Osprey, 31 Bald Eagles, 123 Northern Harriers, 6 Merlins, 5 Peregrine Falcons and an impressive 6,473 Broad-winged Hawks.

Sandhill Cranes are becoming more common in our area. This April there were eight documented Sandhill Cranes: three in Westfield on the 16th, one in Porter on the 17th, and three at the Hamburg Hawkwatch on the 29th, and another on the 30th. Although the only other April to have more Sandhill Cranes was April 2000, eleven of that years fifteen Sandhill Cranes were possibly multiple sightings of the same four individuals – the previous summer (July 29, 1999) seven cranes were released at Tonawanda WMA as part of a joint USGS - USFW experiment.

Between 1:00 and 2:30 PM on April 11, FOUR GOLDEN EAGLES were studied from Maple Road in the Town of Wilson. In documenting these four eagles Willie D'Anna stated: "The plumage appeared almost entirely blackish with a conspicuous moderate size white patch at the base of the inner primaries on each wing" indicating that all four were in juvenile plumage. This is the only record in the B.O.S archives of four Golden Eagles observed at one location on one day. The months fifth Golden Eagle was observed in Westfield on the 15th. Golden Eagles, Sandhill Cranes, and Black Vultures have shown a considerable increase during the last decade.

Other avian species that had outstanding numbers in this month were Great Egret and Northern Saw-whet Owl. On April 28, there were 46 Great Egrets on Motor Island. This is not only the most Great Egrets in April, but over-shadows the previous April 29, 2001 high of only 16. If these birds remain to breed, it should be an excellent year for breeding Great Egrets. The eleven (10 seen and one heard) Northern Saw-whet Owls on the 7th is the single-day record for



April. For comparison, the most recorded on an April Count is three.

On the April Count there were 21 high species' counts as compared to 11 in 2003. However, many of these new highs are likely from better coverage by our many volunteers and especially the late date (April 18). What we now call April Bird Counts have been as early as March 30 and as late as April 18. Nevertheless, I think you find this years count information very interesting, especially the "Rare count sightings" (for example: 13 Pine Warblers!) and the "Notable Species Average Changes". A perennial problem with the count is still non-uniform coverage – two sections were covered by only one person while seven other sections were covered by more than a dozen.

I would like to acknowledge the following sources for providing information and suggestions in the writing this article.

Beardslee, C. S. and Mitchell. 1965. *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*. Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, vol. 22.

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## Hamburg Hawkwatch Spring 2004 Report

By Jim Landau

The National Weather Service in Buffalo described February 2004 as "tame" for Western New York, with milder, sunnier conditions prevailing for the last week, bringing premature thoughts of an early spring. With the addition of a bonus Leap Day, some eager hawk-watchers managed to "push" our season by two days and logged 40 individuals for the month, predictably Turkey Vultures, a Northern Harrier, Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks.

March 2004 was the cloudiest on record, with the winter's heaviest snowfall on the 16th. Temperatures for the month were mild overall however, and brought the season's first migrating Cooper's and Red-shouldered Hawks on March 1. The first Bald Eagle arrived on March 5, as did the first American Kestrel. Our first "3-digit bird day" wasn't logged until March 19, challenging the enthusiasm (but not the commitment) of our dedicated volunteers. Three days later on the 22nd, Bill Watson was able to turn a lemon of a day (45 birds logged, 43 of them Turkey Vultures) into lemonade by spotting a Black Vulture, only the second recorded at Hamburg. The remaining days of March saw a steady stream of raptors, peaking on March 28 with our highest count day of the season (2293 including the first Ospreys).

April continued March's cloudy trend, with only 7 days of abundant sunshine and nearly 4 inches of rain measured – April showers indeed! Despite four days lost to weather, this month still provided a few high points. April 9 brought the season's sole Northern Goshawk, while the first of the season's two Golden Eagles arrived the next day. On April 19, another otherwise unimpressive day was made noteworthy by the appearance of a second Black Vulture – this time spotted by the sharp-eyed Dean DiTommaso and Bill Watson. April 26 logged our largest single day Broad-winged Hawk flight of 1016 individuals.

Rainfall was excessive for the third consecutive May, and unsettled weather dogged the hawkwatch with showers and thunderstorms well past our official closing date of the 15<sup>th</sup>. The 14<sup>th</sup> did provide our second Golden Eagle and raised hopes of a strong finish to the season. While watchers were prepared to check for any opportunity to pick up signs of the anticipated late-month immature Broad-winged flight, they never got the chance. The wet weather pattern that had been holding up the late season hawk flights finally did provide a break near the end of the month. However, drier southwesterly winds that finally arrived on May 24<sup>th</sup>

---

## Western New York Hawkwatch Reports

Hawkwatch summaries are presented below for two of western New York's spring sites: Hamburg and Ripley, NY. These data have been used to piece together our knowledge of raptor migration in North America, estimate population trends, range expansion, and other aspects of raptor biology. Quite importantly, the data can also be used to educate the public about controversial land use issues (see Ripley hawkwatch article). The 2004 reports are presented by their respective coordinators: Jim Landau, Hamburg Hawkwatch and Leonard DeFrancisco (Gil Randell), Ripley Hawkwatch.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

- \* - Indicates first record for the year.
- F - Indicates first record for the migration.
- L - Indicates last record for the migration.
- (f) Indicates record from feeding station.
- PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	4	4	Bear Lake	Mosher
"	8-11	4 max	Franklinville	DeSha
"	10; 17	4; 3	Tonawanda	Hess
"	17; 20	6; 3	East Aurora	Holmes
"	19	9	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson, DiTommaso
Horned Grebe	4	13	Bear Lake	Mosher
"	8	2; 22	Olcott; Barker	Watson
Red-necked Grebe	8	18; 34	Olcott; Barker	Watson
D.-crested Cormorant	4	10	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	6	80	Buffalo	Morgante
"	6; 22	11; 248	Motor I.	Watson
"	17	15	Orchard Park	Morgante
* American Bittern	11F	4	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	24	3	Tonawanda WMA	D'Anna, Potter
Great Blue Heron	4; 10	53; 47	Motor I.	Burch
"	6; 22	74; 84	Motor I.	Watson
Great Egret	4F; 10	4; 6	Motor I.	Burch
"	6; 22; 28; 30	7; 27; 46; 26	Motor I.	Watson
"	9	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Green Heron	20	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	22	2	Lancaster	Morgante
Black-cr. Night-Heron	4; 10	43; 63	Motor I.	Burch
"	6; 7; 22	19; 67; 77	Motor I.	Watson
Black Vulture	19	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Di Tommaso, Watson
Turkey Vulture	5; 12	307; 131	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	8	60	Buffalo	Yoerg, Henderson
Snow Goose	8	1	Somerset	Watson
"	11	1 blue	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Tundra Swan	4; 24	241; 3	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	11	10	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	16	1	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
American Wigeon	4	56	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
Blue-winged Teal	5	1	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg
"	8; 19	2; 2	Hartland; Hamburg Hawkw.	Watson
"	17	5	Watts Flats WMA	Berry
Northern Shoveler	11	16	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16	4	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
"	17	2	East Aurora	Holmes
"	24	35	Iroquois NWR	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Northern Pintail	16	92	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
"	24	6	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Canvasback	4	8	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	11	4	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Ring-necked Duck	4	135; 90	Ton. WMA; Oak Orch. WMA	Watson
"	16	203	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
Greater Scaup	11	3	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Lesser Scaup	4	3; 4	Ton. WMA; Oak Orch. WMA	Watson
Surf Scoter	6	1	Buffalo	Morgante
White-winged Scoter	4	4	Bear Lake	Mosher
Common Merganser	10; 11	1; 1	East Aurora	Holmes
Red-br. Merganser	8	150; 180	Olcott; Barker	Watson
Ruddy Duck	11	10	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16	32	Iroquois NWR	Roberson
"	16	1	Smithville, Ont.	D'Anna et al
"	17	6	Brocton Reservoir	Mosher
"	24	31	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Osprey	8; 11; 15	11; 4; 7	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew et al
"	10; 13; 15	1; 1; 1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	12; 26	4; 7	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	24	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Bald Eagle	3	1 imm.	Navy I.	Burch
"	4; 24	1; 2	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	6	1 imm; 1	Machias; Strawberry I.	DeSha; Watson
"	8; 26; 29	2; 2; 2	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew et al; Watson; Rew et al
"	11	1	Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	13; 16	1; 1	Iroquois NWR	Hess; Roberson
"	15	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	17	1 ad.	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	17	1	Watts Flats WMA	Berry
* Broad-winged Hawk	12E; 26	3; 1016	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al
"	19	5	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson, DiTommaso
Golden Eagle	11	4 imm	Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	15	1 imm	Westfield	Morgante
Merlin	11	1	Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	12	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	29	1	Fort Niagara SP	Roberson
"	29	1	East Aurora	Holmes
Peregrine Falcon	10	2	Buffalo	Burch
"	30	1	Tifft NP	Watson
* Virginia Rail	10F; 20	3; 1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	11	2	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Sora	23	1	Newfane	Watson
"	24	6	Tonawanda WMA	D'Anna, Potter
"	25	2	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
* Common Moorhen	11F	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	1	Tonawanda WMA	S&T O'Donnell
* Sandhill Crane	16F	3	Westfield	Morgante
"	17	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	29	3	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Rew
"	30	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Chilton
Greater Yellowlegs	8; 24	10; 4	Iroquois NWR	Watson
* Lesser Yellowlegs	5F	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	24	3	Iroquois NWR	Watson
* Solitary Sandpiper	24F	1	East Aurora	Holmes
Pectoral Sandpiper	24	4	Iroquois NWR	Watson
* Dunlin	17F	2	Wheatfield	D'Anna, Potter
"	24	3	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Wilson's Snipe	1 - 26	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	4; 24	8; 1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	17	15	Watts Flats WMA	Berry
Little Gull	11	4	Artpark	Yoerg, Henderson
Bonaparte's Gull	29	63	Fort Niagara SP	Roberson
Glaucous Gull	25	1	Niagara Falls	D'Anna
Great Black-b. Gull	29	1	Marilla	Holmes
* Caspian Tern	11F	2	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, DiTommaso
"	11F	2	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna, DiTommaso
"	20	2	Franklinville	DeSha
"	24	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	29	1	Fort Niagara SP	Roberson
* Common Tern	16F	2	Fort Niagara SP	Landon
"	22	1; 3	Tonawanda; Tifft NP	Watson
"	27	100	Lewiston	Yonker
"	29	120	Fort Niagara SP	Roberson
* Black Tern	<u>24F</u>	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Short-eared Owl	7	4	Porter	S&T O'Donnell
Nor. Saw-whet Owl	7	1	Newfane	Watson
"	7	9	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	Potter
"	7	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Potter
Chimney Swift	28	8	Buffalo	J Landau
"	29	1	Chautauqua Inst.	Berry
* Red-headed Wdpkr.	15	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	30	1	Alden (f)	Coniglio
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	11F	5	Busti	Berry
"	13	2	Tifft NP	Watson
* Gr. Cr. Flycatcher	30F	1	Goat I.	Potter
Northern Shrike	7L	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	S&T O'Donnell
Blue-headed Vireo	24	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante
"	25	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Yoerg
* Warbling Vireo	30F	2	Tifft NP	Watson
* Purple Martin	13F	1	Tonawanda WMA	Hess
"	25	1	Hamburg	Morgante
Tree Swallow	6	46	Iroquois NWR	Watson
* N. Rough-w. Swallow	8F	1	South Ripley	Morgante
"	16	8	Fort Niagara SP	Landon
* Bank Swallow	13F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Cliff Swallow	30	11	N. Tonawanda	Watson
* Barn Swallow	11F	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	16	6	Fort Niagara SP	Landon
Carolina Wren	11	4	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna et al
"	18	1	Poland	Berry



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	24; 31	1; 1	Tifft NP	Andrle et al; Watson
* House Wren	24F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	25	2	Hamburg	Morgante
"	25	3	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
Winter Wren	3	1	Deveaux Woods SP	S O'Donnell
"	7	1	Times Beach	Hess
"	8	1	Westfield	Morgante
"	22	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	29	1	East Aurora	Holmes
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	16	3	Fort Niagara SP	Landon
* Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	22	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	24	1	Tifft NP	Landau, Andrle et al
* Gray-cheeked Thrush	26F	1	Goat I.	Roberson
* Hermit Thrush	12F	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	13	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Gray Catbird	25	1	Four Mile Creek SP	D'Anna, Potter
Brown Thrasher	20	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	24	1	Tifft NP	Landau, Andrle
* American Pipit	4F	5	Busti	Berry
* Blue-winged Warbler	30F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
* Nashville Warbler	25F	1	Tifft NP	Yoerg
"	29	1	East Aurora	Holmes
* Yellow Warbler	29F	2	East Aurora	Holmes
"	30	2	Fort Niagara SP	Landon
"	30	8	Tifft NP	Watson
"	30	1	Goat I.	Roberson
* Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	30F	2	Goat I.	Roberson
Yellow-r. Warbler	16F	1	Fort Niagara SP	Landon
* Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	24F	3	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante
"	24	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	25	1	Hamburg	Morgante
* Blackburnian Warbler	30F	1	Goat I.	Potter
Pine Warbler	2; 24	2; 1	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante
"	22; 26	1; 2	Pomfret	Mosher
"	25	2	Hamburg	Morgante
"	30	1	Fredonia	Moshers
Palm Warbler	25	3	Tifft NP	Yoerg
"	29	1	Machias	DeSha
* American Redstart	30F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
* Northern Waterthrush	22F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	24	1	Pomfret	Mosher
* La. Waterthrush	23F	1	Pomfret	Moshers
"	24	2	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante
* Common Yellowthroat	30F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Eastern Towhee	21	1	Niagara Falls (f)	Roberson
Amer. Tree Sparrow	22; 23L	1; 1	Lancaster	Morgante
* Chipping Sparrow	15F	1	Niagara Falls	S&T O'Donnell
"	16	1	Fort Niagara SP	Landon
* Field Sparrow	1F	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	4	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
* Vesper Sparrow	4F	1	Pomfret	Moshers
"	5; 6	1; 1	Colden	J&K Landau



<u>Species</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Savannah Sparrow	4	1	Busti	Berry
* Fox Sparrow	5F	1	Colden	J&K Landau
"	6	1	Niagara Falls	S&T O'Donnell
"	11	2	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	19	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	22	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Swamp Sparrow	11	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg
White-cr. Sparrow	25F-30	1	Youngstown (f)	Landon, Yonker
"	30	4	Tifft NP	Watson
Lapland Longspur	4L	2	Pomfret	Mosher et al
* Rose-br. Grosbeak	<u>26F</u>	1	Lancaster	Marcello
* Bobolink	30F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
Rusty Blackbird	11	20	Oak Orchard WMA	Yoerg
"	11	50	Buckhorn I. SP	S&T O'Donnell
"	20	1	East Aurora	Holmes
"	28	28	Royalton	Watson
Brown-headed Cowbird	24	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
* Baltimore Oriole	29F	1	Colden	K Landau
"	30	1	Goat I.	Potter, Roberson
Purple Finch	17F	3	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	20; 21	8; 6	Franklinville (f)	DeSha
"	21 - 25	2	Youngstown (f)	Landon, Yonker
Common Redpoll	4	17	Colden	J&K Landau
"	5	1	Franklinville (f)	DeSha
Pine Siskin	3 - 25	9 repts.	Throughout WNY	Many observers
American Goldfinch	9; 14; 27	72; 60; 56	Franklinville (f)	DeSha

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year: 138**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month: 054**

**Total for the year 2004: 192**

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## Birding Quiz

*By Mike Morgante*

Bird species names seem to always be changing. I know that the recent change of Oldsquaw to Long-tailed Duck will take me a long time (if ever) to get used to. For this quiz, I reviewed bird species names from Roger Tory Peterson's *A Field Guide to the Birds*, 1947 edition.

Part A: What are the current names for these species that were different in 1947?

1. Holboell's Grebe
2. Pigeon Hawk
3. American Scoter
4. Hudsonian Curlew
5. Richardson's Owl

Part B: What were the names in 1947 for these species?

1. American Wigeon
2. Dunlin
3. Anhinga
4. Magnificent Frigatebird
5. Gray-cheeked Thrush

*Answers to Part B:*  
1. Baldpate  
2. Red-backed Sandpiper  
3. Water Turkey  
4. Man-o'-War Bird  
5. Olive-backed Thrush

*Answers to Part A:*  
1. Red-necked Grebe  
2. Merlin  
3. Black Scoter  
4. Whimbrel  
5. Boreal Owl



were sufficiently strong enough that the raptors were pushed farther east, away from our lakeshore location. (Evidenced by an astonishing 6104 raptors seen at Braddock Bay Hawk Watch in the afternoon of the same day.)

All in all, Spring 2004 was a mixed bag at Hamburg. The big kettles of Broad-winged Hawks that thrill raptorphiles, pad the season totals, and catch the attention of even those birders who may be otherwise indifferent to hawks, simply failed to materialize over our location. A lucky few were on hand to witness the two Black Vultures seen this year, far and away the “birds of the season” at Hamburg. This season enjoyed 73 days of coverage, with only three scheduled days missed due to weather. A total of 415.7 hours of watch time were logged, yielding 11938 raptors and vultures of 16 species. It is becoming clear that we are a “wee bit west” of the prevailing weather patterns that stream the bulk of migrating raptors through Western New York northward each spring.

In addition to raptors, numerous other migrant species were noted, highlighted by Great Egret, Snow Goose, Tundra Swan, Sandhill Crane, Wilson’s Snipe, Eastern Bluebird, Savannah Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, Common Redpoll and Evening Grosbeak.

### 2004 Hamburg Hawkwatch

	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Total</u>
Black Vulture		1	1	0	2
Turkey Vulture	6	3902	3331	484	7723
Osprey		4	74	13	91
Bald Eagle		12	11	16	39
Northern Harrier	1	39	42	22	104
Sharp-shinned		69	259	67	395
Cooper's Hawk		41	38	6	85
Northern Goshawk		0	1	0	1
Red-shouldered		230	33	7	270
Broad-winged		0	1475	282	1757
Red-tailed Hawk	30	576	423	138	1167
Rough-legged	2	40	51	2	95
Golden Eagle		0	1	1	2
American Kestrel		38	32	4	74
Merlin		0	4	0	4
Peregrine Falcon		1	2	0	3
Unid. Raptor	1	27	83	15	126
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>40</u></b>	<b><u>4980</u></b>	<b><u>5861</u></b>	<b><u>1057</u></b>	<b><u>11938</u></b>
<b><u>Hours</u></b>	<b><u>7.5</u></b>	<b><u>156.4</u></b>	<b><u>178.8</u></b>	<b><u>73</u></b>	<b><u>415.7</u></b>
<b><u>Days</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>28</u></b>	<b><u>13</u></b>	<b><u>73</u></b>

Special thanks to our dedicated hawkwatch volunteers; Bob Andrie, Bill Watson, Mike Zebehazy, Bruce Chilton, Fran Rew, Mike Hamilton, Doug Happ,

Lewis Crowell, Bob & Donna DeLeon and Sharon Sisti. Additional thanks to Dean DiTommaso, Mike Turisk, Willie D’Anna, Betsy Potter, Jerry Lazarczyk and Don Harris and the good people on staff at Lakeside Memorial Park. Thanks as well to the many birders who stopped by over the course of the season to see what was flying.

Anyone with questions or comments regarding this year’s watch or interest in volunteering for next spring’s watch can contact Jim Landau at 9195 State Road, Colden, NY 14033, by phone at (716) 941-3869 or e-mail [kjlandau@localnet.com](mailto:kjlandau@localnet.com).

This spring saw continued advances on the technology front, with a number of our regular watchers uploading their daily count information directly to HMANA (Hawk Migration Association of North America). [www.hawkcount.org](http://www.hawkcount.org) allows anyone with internet access the opportunity to follow the day to day and month to month sightings at scores of watch sites around the country. We also saw a new tool made available in the attempt to track the progress of migrating hawks. Computer images of thermal updraft forecasts may allow watchers to predict when and where a significant flight might occur. Further information about this can be found at Canadian hawk-watcher Paul Summerskill’s website:

[www.ideasbypaul.ca](http://www.ideasbypaul.ca). Some of this season’s watchers began delving into this internet technology and will no doubt do so in earnest next year.

### Ripley Hawkwatch Spring 2004 Report

*by Len DeFrancisco, Coordinator; Report submitted by Gil Randell (6/1/04)*

Winter conditions dominated March weather for the Ripley Hawk Watch, with significant relief from sub-freezing temperatures delayed until the third week of the month. Snow appeared several times in April, and winter conditions recurred throughout the month. Ice finally left the shore of Lake Erie adjacent to the hawk watch on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, but the weather continued to be cold as westerly and northerly winds blowing in from the still-cold waters of Lake Erie chilled the site. Winds off the lake brought heavy fog to the warmer lake shore, sometimes as far inland as six miles. Fog plagued the watch throughout the season, closing or seriously restricting observation on 15 different days: one day in March, nine in April, and five in May.

Members of the Ripley Hawk Watch continue to be concerned about a wind-turbine project proposed for



the area of the hawk watch. The project would site 34 turbines 400 feet tall on a line five-and-one-half miles long in the towns of Ripley and Westfield along the edge of the escarpment overlooking Lake Erie. Flights of migrating raptors, other protected birds, and unknown numbers of migrating bats flow directly through the areas proposed for the turbines, frequently at altitudes that would put them at severe risk for collision with the turbine blades, which move at speeds of over 200 miles per hour at their tips.

Ripley Hawk Watch concerns about the project have been supported by both the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The best siting criteria at present for turbine projects are those incorporated in the interim guidelines of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Among other stipulations, these guidelines clearly advise **against** the following:

1) siting turbine projects on ridge lines, 2) siting projects in the path of major raptor and passerine migration flyways, 3) siting projects in areas where there are known concentrations of birds (as in important bird areas as designated by the New York State Audubon Society), 4) siting projects in proximity to nesting endangered or threatened species.

**In defiance of these guidelines**, the proposed project would be located:

1) on a ridge line overlooking Lake Erie, 2) smack in the middle of a major raptor and passerine migration flyway, 3) in the middle of a NYS Audubon-designated important bird area, 4) in proximity to several successful Bald Eagle nests.

The population of resident Bald Eagles in proximity to the hawk watch has expanded dramatically, with at least two active nests and the adults and young associated with them. These are the first documented eagle nests in the area since the 1960's. Hawk watch volunteers exercised as much care as possible in separating out migrant birds from resident birds: what a nice problem to have! Volunteers documented 23 sightings of resident eagles on 15 different days. On May 5<sup>th</sup>, five resident eagles cavorted in the area where the turbines are proposed. Of the 23 sightings of local eagles, 13 involved a clear potential conflict with the proposed turbines.

The first migrating Bald Eagle was observed on March 11<sup>th</sup>. The largest number of migrating eagles sighted in one day occurred on April 29<sup>th</sup>: eight Bald Eagles, one short of last year's record of nine in one day. Migrating Bald Eagles totaled 58. We observed three Golden Eagles and one unidentified eagle for a

total of 62 migrating eagles. Although this number is down considerably from the 2003 sightings of migrant eagles, the 2003 watch extended well into June, whereas the 2004 watch terminated mid-May. Sightings of resident and migrant eagles totaled 85 for 2004.

A record number of Turkey Vultures (10,157) offset low numbers of some of the other migrants. Osprey numbers were down compared to 2003 (from 191 down to 120); Cooper's Hawks, Northern Goshawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, Merlins and Peregrine Falcons, down somewhat; Sharp-shinned Hawks, down significantly (from 1,735 to 1,057); American Kestrels, also down sharply (from 359 to 289). Northern Harrier and Broad-winged Hawk numbers were up; Rough-legged Hawk numbers more than tripled 2003 numbers (from 13 up to 41).

Among the non-raptor migrants of note, the Ripley Hawk Watch bettered last year's number of 33 Sandhill Cranes, which was a year's record for the watch. The new record set this year is 59 cranes in one season, which further consolidates the Ripley Hawk Watch's claim to be the best place in New York State to observe migrating Sandhill Cranes. Cranes were seen on 11 different days. The year's first sighting of cranes (March 28<sup>th</sup>) was the largest flock documented at the hawk watch and included 15 birds.

The Ripley Hawk Watch is also a good location for observing migrant loons. With their fast, direct, driven flight due north, the loons offered a repeated contrast to the migrating raptors. Most of the loons took a line of flight and altitude that would have sent them directly through the line of proposed turbines.

Other non-raptor migrants observed at the watch included Double-crested Cormorants, Canada Geese, several species of ducks, a number of gull species (including Bonaparte's Gull), Great Blue Herons (singly and in flocks of up to 6 birds), Green Herons, a Great Egret, Killdeer and a number of other shorebirds (including Spotted Sandpipers, Solitary Sandpipers, Lesser Yellow-legs and Snipe), Turkeys, Ruffed Grouse, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Belted Kingfishers, several species of woodpeckers (Pileated, Northern Flicker, Red-bellied, Red-headed and Downy), Horned Larks, Purple Martins, Tree Swallows, Rough-winged Swallows, Barn Swallows and Cliff Swallows, Crows and Blue Jays in sometimes huge flocks, Chickadees, Tufted Titmouses, Carolina Wrens, House Wrens, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Gray Catbirds, Wood Thrushes, Bluebirds, several warbler species (Black-throated Green, Black and White, and



Yellow), Common Yellowthroats, Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, Starlings, Eastern Meadowlarks, Bobolinks, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Cardinals, Gold Finches, Purple Finches, Cardinals, Eastern Towhees, Song Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows and Field Sparrows.

The core group of Ripley Hawk Watch volunteers, each with 10 or more hours on the site, included coordinator Len DeFrancisco, Gil and Jann Randell, Eileen and Bill Jowett, Bill Dietz, Terry Mahoney, Bob Sundell, Mike Ceci, Dave Feliciano, and Tom Simmons. We're grateful to the Roger Tory Peterson Institute for allowing us the use of their portable radios for supplemental weather information and communication.

### 2004 Ripley Hawkwatch

	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Turkey Vulture	4,645	4,949	563	<b>10,157</b>
Osprey	3	85	32	<b>120</b>
Bald Eagle	5	31	22	<b>58</b>
Northern Harrier	85	123	31	<b>239</b>
Sharp-shinned Hawk	135	772	150	<b>1,057</b>
Cooper's Hawk	33	58	14	<b>105</b>
Northern Goshawk	0	3	0	<b>3</b>
Red-sh. Hawk	146	16	0	<b>162</b>
Broad-winged Hawk	0	6,473	546	<b>7,019</b>
Red-tailed Hawk	474	626	224	<b>1,324</b>
Rough-legged Hawk	12	21	8	<b>41</b>
Golden Eagle	0	0	3	<b>3</b>
American Kestrel	106	148	35	<b>289</b>
Merlin	1	6	4	<b>11</b>
Peregrine Falcon	1	5	2	<b>8</b>
Unidentified Raptor	13	62	18	<b>93</b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>5,659</u></b>	<b><u>13,378</u></b>	<b><u>1,652</u></b>	<b><u>20,689</u></b>
 <b><u>Days</u></b>	 <b><u>18</u></b>	 <b><u>25</u></b>	 <b><u>12</u></b>	 <b><u>55</u></b>
<b><u>Hours</u></b>	<b><u>77</u></b>	<b><u>155</u></b>	<b><u>68</u></b>	<b><u>300</u></b>

Further details of the season are available through the Hawk Migration Association of North America and are available for viewing at HMANA's [www.hawkcount.org](http://www.hawkcount.org). Comments or questions about this report or the Ripley Hawk Watch should be directed to Len DeFrancisco (716/665-4999) or Gil Randell (716/753-2333 or email [janngil@cecomet.net](mailto:janngil@cecomet.net)).

## Brown-headed Cowbird Parasitism Project

by Bill Watson

The 2004 season is the last year of the Brown-headed Cowbird Parasitism and NYSBBA Projects. The Research Committee is urging your participation.

During 2004 field study B.O.S. members and Atlas workers are asked to document Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism. Primary aims included determining the Brown-headed Cowbird "breeding" season length, frequency of nest parasitism, and relative frequency of host species. The Cowbird Coupon (on page 53) should be completed for all reports. We are especially interested in data collected during NYSBBA 2000. Since one aim is to determine the breakdown of host species, it is important to report **all** observations. If only the odd host is reported and not more common ones (e.g., Yellow Warbler) the species breakdown by percentage will be hopelessly inaccurate. Your help with this project will be greatly appreciated.

Last year we had the most records of any year with thirteen. It seems that each year of the project reveals new surprises and the 2003 breeding season was no exception. The host species recorded: Song Sparrow (5), Yellow Warbler (1; compare to 7 records for 2000-02), Chipping Sparrow (2), \*Magnolia Warbler (1), \*Swamp Sparrow (1), \*Dark-eyed Junco (1), \*American Redstart (1), and \*Willow Flycatcher (1). Asterisked species are first reported in 2003.

The B.O.S. Research Committee thank the following persons for submitting reports in 2003: Douglas Beattie, Willie D'Anna, Donna V. DeLeon, Robert S. DeLeon, Doug Happ, Gerald S. Lazarczyk, and Mike Zebehazy.

What should be Reported? We are interested in **all the data you have** regarding incidents of Brown-headed Cowbird eggs in nest, unfledged young in nests, and fledglings dependent on adults. This will help us establish date ranges for cowbird eggs, nestlings, and fledglings in the B.O.S. study area. We welcome data from Canada, as well as the United States. Cowbird parasitism documentation that extends/updates that published in *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region* by Clark Beardslee and Harold Mitchell (1965) should be submitted. So please, dust off those old records and send them my way.



## Report of the 2004 Annual B.O.S. April Bird Count

Date: April 18, 2004

Weather: Terry Yonker, Compiler: Mike Hamilton

### Weather Synopsis

Weather became a major factor in early migration on this count day. A deep low pressure area was located in the northern plains with a cold front trailing to the southwest through northern Texas and a warm front lifting northward from the Dakotas to New England. The warm front passed through the count area during the late morning passing Buffalo airport around 11 am. Attending the passage of the warm front was a vigorous squall line that moved through the count area from west to east with strong, gusty winds, intense lightning, and in some areas, marble-sized hail. As a result of the passage of the warm front, temperatures rose quickly, winds shifted from the east to the south, and sunshine greeted many counters during the afternoon.

### Greater Buffalo International Airport

Sunrise: 6:28 AM EDT

Sunset: 8:02 PM EDT

TIME	WEATHER	TEM P	DEW PT	PRESSURE	DIR/WIND	REMARKS
12:00 am	Mostly Cloudy	54	50	30.25	Calm	
3:00 am	Light Fog	50	49	30.23	E5	
6:00 am	Light Fog	50	48	30.23	E8	
9:00 am	Cloudy	57	50	30.21	E12	Heavy squall at 11 AM
12:00 pm	Mostly Cloudy	57	52	30.18	SE20,gust 26	Warm front passage
3:00 pm	Mostly Cloudy	71	57	30.09	S7	
6:00 pm	Mostly Cloudy	73	56	30.02	SW12	
9:00 pm	Mainly Clear	63	53	30.01	S9	

**Compilation:** The following is a list of species recorded on the count together with the number of individuals tabulated. Bold face names indicate species for which acceptable written verification forms were received. **F** represents first and **L** last dates for the spring migration, \* first date for the year. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers are given in parentheses.

#### **Geese - Herons**

Canada Goose	14,099		Bufflehead	1,756
Mute Swan	7	(3,5,20)	Common Goldeneye	191
Tundra Swan	25	(10,17)	Hooded Merganser	162
Wood Duck	354		Common Merganser	321
Gadwall	58		Red-breasted Merganser	3,220
American Wigeon	361		Ruddy Duck	466
American Black Duck	25		unspecified waterfowl	2 (20)
Mallard	1,224		Ring-necked Pheasant	48
Blue-winged Teal	121		Ruffed Grouse	24
Northern Shoveler	255		Wild Turkey	247
Northern Pintail	190		Red-throated Loon	9 (3,5,22)
Green-winged Teal	194		Common Loon	64
Canvasback	12	(6,7,13)	Pied-billed Grebe	52
Redhead	11	(1,9,10)	Horned Grebe	33
Ring-necked Duck	760		Red-necked Grebe	37
Greater Scaup	421		Double-crested Cormorant	3,784
Lesser Scaup	493		Great Blue Heron	471
unspecified scaup	21	(6,10,25)	Great Egret	7 (9,10,11)
Surf Scoter	1	(25)	Green Heron	4 *F
White-winged Scoter	30		Black-crowned Night-Heron	178 (2,8,9)
Long-tailed Duck	227			

#### **Vultures - Cranes**

Turkey Vulture	950	unspecified accipiters	4 (20)
Osprey	52	Red-shouldered Hawk	28
Bald Eagle	18	Broad-winged Hawk	1,760
Northern Harrier	91	Red-tailed Hawk	376
Sharp-shinned Hawk	262	Rough-legged Hawk	34
Cooper's Hawk	45	unspecified buteos	35 (5,20)



American Kestrel	170		unspecified hawks	55	(20)
Merlin	4	(20,22)	Virginia Rail	4	(3,5,10)
Peregrine Falcon	3	(9,11)	Sora	*F 1	(10)
unspecified falcons	3	(20)	American Coot	140	

#### Plovers – Terns

Killdeer	445		Bonaparte's Gull	3,868	
Greater Yellowlegs	75		Ring-billed Gull	38,487	
Lesser Yellowlegs	24		Herring Gull	2,523	
Spotted Sandpiper	*F 6		Lesser Black-backed Gull	3	(3,7)
Upland Sandpiper	*F 2	(10)	Glaucous Gull	2	(3,7)
Pectoral Sandpiper	*F 11	(6,20)	Great Black-backed Gull	153	
Dunlin	1	(8)	unspecified gulls	15	(10,20)
Wilson's Snipe	139		Caspian Tern	81	
American Woodcock	54		Common Tern	143	
Little Gull	2	(2,21)			

#### Pigeons - Swallows

Rock Pigeon	1,467		Pileated Woodpecker	28	
Mourning Dove	1,846		Eastern Phoebe	283	
Eastern Screech-Owl	9		Blue-headed Vireo	*F 5	(19,20,24)
Great Horned Owl	19		Blue Jay	751	
Barred Owl	16		American Crow	2,181	
Short-eared Owl	2	(3,20)	Common Raven	16	
Chimney Swift	*F 1	(22)	Horned Lark	53	
Belted Kingfisher	* 136		Purple Martin	73	
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	(28)	Tree Swallow	690	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	146		N.Rough-winged Swallow	102	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	147		Bank Swallow	2	(7)
Downy Woodpecker	381		Cliff Swallow	*F 13	(2,9)
Hairy Woodpecker	81		Barn Swallow	165	
Northern Flicker	683				

#### Tits - Waxwings

Black-capped Chickadee	1,079		Eastern Bluebird	152	
Tufted Titmouse	143		Hermit Thrush	37	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	57		American Robin	6,015	
White-breasted Nuthatch	191		Gray Catbird	6	
Brown Creeper	54		Northern Mockingbird	32	
Carolina Wren	29		Brown Thrasher	*F 8	
Winter Wren	10		European Starling	9,783	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	111		American Pipit	35	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	129		Cedar Waxwing	74	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	*F 7				

#### Warblers - House Sparrows

Yellow-rumped Warbler	54		unspecified sparrows	12	
Pine Warbler	13		Northern Cardinal	919	(20)
<b>Palm Warbler</b>	*F 1	(3)	Red-winged Blackbird	9,149	
Eastern Towhee	F 43		Eastern Meadowlark	230	
American Tree Sparrow	120		Rusty Blackbird	1,606	
Chipping Sparrow	556		Common Grackle	6,409	
Field Sparrow	105		Brown-headed Cowbird	*F 842	
Vesper Sparrow	13		Purple Finch	330	
Savannah Sparrow	249		House Finch	514	
Fox Sparrow	19		Common Redpoll	4	(28)
Song Sparrow	2,028		Pine Siskin	71	
Swamp Sparrow	221		American Goldfinch	1,852	
White-throated Sparrow	183		Evening Grosbeak	* 14	(25,27,28)
White-crowned Sparrow	F 23		House Sparrow	1,661	
Dark-eyed Junco	1,336				



SUMMARY INFORMATION:    Total Species Observed: 147  
                                  Total Individual Birds Observed: 136,860  
                                  Number of Observers: 266

COMPARATIVE INFORMATION: Associated charts, available from Michael Hamilton, compare this year's records with those for 1995-2004 and those for 1935-2004. A chart listing totals for each species per section for 2004 is also available. In addition the following notes are added:

INDIVIDUAL SPECIES SINCE 1935:

Highest counts: Double-crested Cormorant, 3784 (29 x the ave.); Bald Eagle, 18 (9 x the ave.); Sharp-shinned Hawk, 262 (9 x the ave.); Broad-winged Hawk, 1760 (65 x the ave.); Peregrine Falcon, 3 (ave.~0); Virginia Rail, 4 (ave.~0); Sandhill Crane, 3 (ave.~0); Spotted Sandpiper, 6 (ave.~0); Upland Sandpiper, 2 (ave.~0); American Woodcock, 54 (3 x ave.); Lesser Black-backed Gull, 3 (ave.~0); Barred Owl, 16 (8 x ave.); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 146 (8 x the ave.); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 147 (7 x ave.); Blue-headed Vireo, 5 (ave.~0); (Common Raven, 16 (8 x the ave.); Cliff Swallow, 13 (ave.~0); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 7 (ave.~0); Yellow-rumped Warbler, 54 (8 x ave.); Pine Warbler, 13 (ave.~0); Chipping Sparrow, 556 (12 x ave.); Ameican Goldfinch, 1852 (4 x ave.)

Rare count sightings: Spotted Sandpiper, 6 (2<sup>nd</sup> sighting in decade); Upland Sandpiper, 2 (1<sup>st</sup> sighting in decade); Chimney Swift, 1 (1<sup>st</sup> sighting in decade, 3rd since '35); Bank Swallow, 2 (2nd sighting in decade); Pine Warbler, 13 (2<sup>nd</sup> sighting in decade)

NOTEABLE SPECIES AVERAGE CHANGES (entire count period / last decade):

Tundra Swan, 95/45; Wood Duck, 141/360; Gadwall, 25/64; American Black Duck, 288/60; Northern Shoveler, 40/142; Northern Pintail, 1179/358; Green-winged Teal, 84/197; Canvasback, 406/120; ; Redhead, 135/31; Ring-necked Duck, 504/1019; White-winged Scoter, 101/469; Long-tailed Duck, 978/2557; Bufflehead, 981/3049; Common Goldeneye, 917/412; Common Merganser, 1170/489; Ruddy Duck, 74/329; Ring-necked Pheasant, 91/29; Wild Turkey, 69/272; Red-necked Grebe, 29/166; Double-crested Cormorant, 131/822; Great Blue Heron, 168/398; Black-crowned Night-Heron, 44/132; Turkey Vulture, 250/899; Osprey, 8/26; Bald Eagle, 2/8; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 30/82; Cooper's Hawk, 11/23; Broad-winged Hawk, 27/176; American Coot, 186/417; Greater Yellowlegs, 13/30; Pectoral Sandpiper, 48/12; Little Gull, 3/12; Bonaparte's Gull, 4442/14353; Great Black-backed Gull, 59/200; Caspian Tern, 7/34; Mourning Dove, 742/1608; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 18/72; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 21/57; Pileated Woodpecker 11/23; Common Raven, 2/10; Horned Lark, 198/91; Tree Swallow, 682/1546; Northern Rough-winged Swallow, 9/48; Barn Swallow, 19/47; Tufted Titmouse, 29/115; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 21/54; Carolina Wren, 4/13; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 15/34; Northern Mockingbird, 5/20; Brown Thrasher, 2/4; Yellow-rumped Warbler, 7/20; Chipping Sparrow, 47/160; Vesper Sparrow, 62/13; Swamp Sparrow, 37/82; Snow Bunting, 21/3; Eastern Meadowlark, 410/158; Rusty Blackbird, 283/653; Red Crossbill, 6/2; Common Redpoll, 122/14; Pine Siskin, 92/13

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## BOS Official Cowbird Coupon

1. Host species \_\_\_\_\_
2. Nature of Parasitism, such as egg in nest, feeding young, etc.
  
3. Location, include County, Block number, and precise location, if possible.
  
4. Date of observation \_\_\_\_\_
5. Habitat (field, woods, wood lot, scrub, etc.) If the observation was in woods please estimate the distance into the woods from the nearest edge of the woods.
6. Indicate method you used in recording this data. Check one.
  - ☐ I obtained this data by recording all Brown-headed Cowbird observations in a field journal.
  - ☐ I took this information from my Breeding Bird Atlas Field Card that I carry when Atlasing.
  - ☐ Not sure. The year I made this observation I used both methods of Atlasing.  
     please estimate: \_\_\_\_% time using journal    \_\_\_\_% time using card
  - ☐ Data was collected before 2000 during which time I recorded all instances of parasitism.
  - ☐ Data was collected before 2000 during which time I recorded only selected instances of parasitism.
- comments:
  
7. Name, address, and telephone number of observer.
  
8. Remarks (if any)

Send to: Bill Watson

771 Fletcher Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150

(If you are not sure how to fill out any of the questions on the Official Cowbird Coupon please call the **Official Cowbird Coupon Help Line at 695-2820.**)



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## June – August Calendar

**March through August** BOS members are encouraged to participate in the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche (drosche@juno.com or 716-652-8409).

**July 25: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds.** Leader: Mike Hamilton (716-881-6709). Meet at 7:00 AM at Vermont and Busti near the Peace Bridge. We will car pool from there.

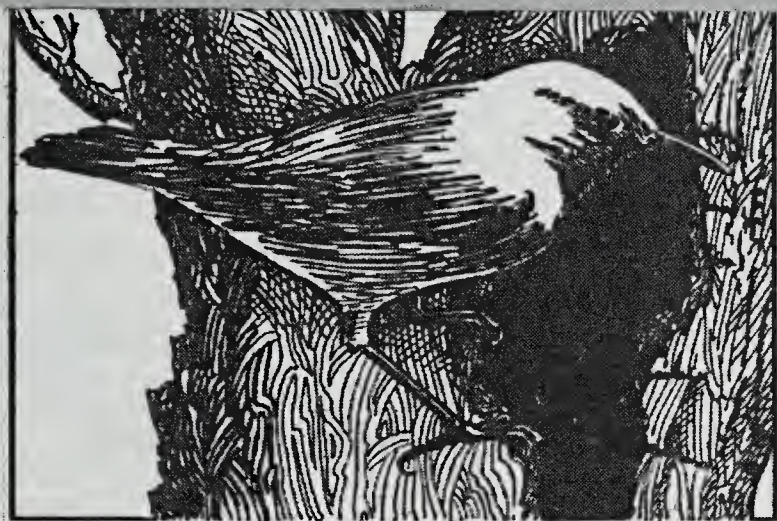
**August 15: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you have questions or would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker or Lynne Landon at 716-745-9129 or email: TerryYonker@cs.com)

**August 29: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds** (Buff-breasted Sandpiper?) and other early migrants. Leader: Mike Hamilton (716-881-6709). Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there.

**September 8: BOS Meeting. Members' Night.** Bring along your favorite stories/slides on a carousel to share. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.



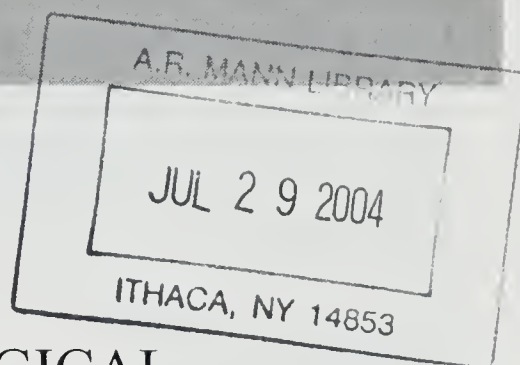
# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 6 June, 2004



### THE MONTH: May

by Gerry Rising

According to Steve McLaughlin and Patrick O'Hara of the National Weather Service, May was wet and mild but unsettled. If nothing else, it represented a major improvement over the previous two Mays. I recall it as the greenest month in years: you needed to know your bird calls for identification.

This May's average temperature was 58.2°F (compare with 55.4° in 2003, 51.8° in 2002), this year's average just over a degree above normal. As usual, however, this masked some wide swings. The first six days were mostly chilly, most of the next 18 warm and the final seven again cool. Rain was once more unusually heavy with a total of 5.7 inches (against 5.4 inches last year, 5.2 in 2002), but all those readings compare with the long-term average of 3.3 inches, making this year 2.4 inches above average, 4th wettest in 60 years of airport records. Almost half of this rain fell May 22-24. If this trend continues, we will all be purchasing swim fins. Happily for birders, however, most of the month's rain fell at night and Count day the 16th was cool, rain-free and half-sunny.

and (2) the preliminary May Count data from Bob and Donna DeLeon indicates a high number of species.

The list of accepted verifications suggests the many remarkable opportunities this month had to offer: Red-throated Loon (away from Lake Ontario), American White Pelican, Snowy Egret, Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret, Trumpeter Swan, Sandhill Crane, Semipalmated Plover (early), Iceland Gull (late), Lesser Black-backed Gull (late), White-eyed Vireo (late), Red-eyed Vireo (early), Common Raven, Sedge Wren, Lawrence's Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler (late), Blackpoll Warbler (early), Worm-eating Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Harris's Sparrow, Painted Bunting and Orchard Oriole.



**Harris's Sparrow:** West Seneca on May 17. Willie D'Anna. (left)

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** Ft. Niagara State Park on May 16. Willie D'Anna. (right)



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All such evaluations must be subjective but I rate this May an outstanding month for birding. Two pieces of evidence support this contention: (1) the stack of verification reports constitutes half of the monthly data I received from statisticians Bob Andrie and Fran Rew, much more than what I have come to expect;

The highlight of the month laps over into June. On May 28 a pair of White-eyed Vireos was discovered by Solon Morse and Jim Berry building a nest (appropriately) on the grounds of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute in Jamestown.

*Birds appearing in high numbers.* Double-crested Cormorant: apparently now about 1500 overall. Turkey Vulture: Watson's 148 at the Hamburg Hawk-watch on May 10 may seem high but I have never seen as many TVs as this year. Duck species highs at the



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Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP): Northern Shoveler, 53 on May 8; Lesser Scaup, 100 on May 9; Ruddy Duck, 175 on May 8. Although certainly not high numbers in the same sense, I note an increasing number, 5, of reports of spring Orange-crowned Warblers this May.

*Low numbers for common species.* As always, it is difficult to prize these out from reports in which observers focus on rare species and large numbers but here are a few. Blue-winged Teal: high counts of 8 each at Iroquois and Batavia WWTP. Common Nighthawk: only scattered reports of one or two birds. Acadian Flycatcher: missing entirely. Brown Thrasher: again mostly reports of one or two birds but 6 were found

on Goat Island by D'Anna and Potter on May 1 and 4 at Evangola State Park by Morgante on May 8. About warblers Terry Mosher offered an interesting comment: "In northern Chautauqua County it was a fine spring for migrating Blackpoll Warblers. The "spruce-budworm warblers," however, continued to be very scarce. For example, whereas in the early '90's you could scarcely stop a car anywhere without hearing the "stitching" of a Tennessee Warbler between May 10 and May 25, this year I didn't hear a single Tennessee until May 21, and I encountered the bird in only two places. I saw only a single Cape May and a single Bay-breasted Warbler all spring." Each spring I too await that mid-May week when Tennessee Warblers abound and this year I missed it. I thought it was due to my declining hearing.

*Numbers perhaps rebuilding.* Pine Siskin: nine reports including a high of 10 at the Youngstown feeder of Landon and Yonker from May 8 to May 13.

## Birding Quiz

by Mike Morgante

Birders often overlook the identification field marks on common species. However, it is useful to learn them and know them well for when an identification challenge is found in the field. This month's quiz can be called "Know Your Yellowlegs." Greater Yellowlegs and Lesser Yellowlegs are both commonly seen in our area during migration. The species are very similar and because they are common and often numerous, there is a tendency to not examine them closely or even to differentiate between species.

### Questions

1. Which yellowlegs species typically has a slightly upturned bill?
2. Which yellowlegs species has a flight call usually consisting of one to two syllables (as compared to three to four of the other species)?
3. Which yellowlegs species in juvenile plumage (seen in our area starting in late summer) is typically grayer, with less streaking?
4. Which yellowlegs species typically arrives first in our area during spring migration?
5. Which yellowlegs species winters farther south, typically south of the United States?
6. What is the notable field mark on the tail for both yellowlegs species?
7. In flight, do the wings project beyond the tail on either or both of the yellowlegs species?
8. Name some other species that can be sometimes be confused with Lesser Yellowlegs in the field.
9. Which species has a breeding range that is farther north and west in North America than the other?
10. Are the legs of both species always yellow?

answers on page 67



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	23	1	Batavia WWTP	Seamans
Common Loon	6; 19	1; 1	Hamburg Hawk; Oak-field	Watson
"	29	1	Golden Hill SP	Watson
Horned Grebe	8	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	9; 15	1; 1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
* <u>Amer. White Pelican</u>	23	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
D.-crested Cormorant	1	73	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	9	246; 77	Motor I.; Strawberry I.	Burch
"	9	120	Buffalo Harbor	Watson
"	22	<u>1200</u>	Mohawk I.	Watson
American Bittern	4	1	Machias	DeSha
"	9	1	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Great Egret	5 - 31	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	6	25	Motor I.	Watson
"	9	17	Motor I.	Burch
"	15	1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	15; 23	1; 1	Tift NP; Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	19	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
* <u>Tricolored Heron</u>	22	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson, Pawlicki
* <u>Cattle Egret</u>	7	2	Batavia WWTP	Seamans
"	21	1	Iroquois NWR	D'Anna et al
"	23	1	Iroquois NWR	O'Donnell et al
Black-cr. Night-Heron	7	68	Motor I.	Watson
"	23; 31	5; 1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
Turkey Vulture	10	148	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
"	14	4	Ft. Niagara SP	Roberson
Mute Swan	23	1	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
* <u>Trumpeter Swan</u>	4	1	Iroquois NWR	Seamans
Tundra Swan	9; 15	1; 1	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	19	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Gadwall	8; 14	13; 2	Batavia WWTP; Iroquois NWR	Watson
American Wigeon	8	22	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	11	1	Iroquois NWR	Holmes
Northern Shoveler	8; 19	53; 8	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	9	40	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	19	4	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Redhead	9	6	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	11	1	Iroquois NWR	Holmes
"	14; 19	6; 1	Iroquois NWR; Batavia WWTP	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	30	10	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Ring-necked Duck	8	57	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	11	1	Iroquois NWR	Holmes
"	15	2; 2	Iroquois NWR; Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Greater Scaup	7; 8	2; 8	Beaver I. SP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	19	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Lesser Scaup	8; 19	25; 11	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	9	100	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
White-winged Scoter	9	2	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Bufflehead	7	141	Beaver I. SP	Watson
"	9; 15L	50; 2	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Common Merganser	14	2	Porter	Mob
"	15	4	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Red-br. Merganser	8	40	Evans	Morgante
"	8 – 19	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	22	21; 31	Morgan's Pt; Windmill Pt	Watson, Pawlicki
Ruddy Duck	8; 14	175; 10	Batavia WWTP; Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	9	150; 6	Batavia WWTP; Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	11	1	Iroquois NWR	Holmes
"	23	2	West Lincoln	Yoerg, Henderson
Osprey	3; 10	3; 2	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson, Lazarczyk, Andrie
"	8; 10	1; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	8; 19	1; 1 (n)	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	11	1; 1	Iroquois NWR; Tonawanda WMA	Holmes
"	30	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Bald Eagle	3; 4	1; 1	Machias	DeSha
"	3; 10	1; 3 imm.	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al; Watson
"	8; 14	1 ad; 1(n)	Oak Orchard WMA; Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	11	2; 1	Iroquois NWR; Tonawanda WMA	Holmes
"	19	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	23	1	Smithville	Yoerg, Henderson
"	29	3	West Valley	J&K Landau
"	30	1 ad, 2 imm	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Broad-winged Hawk	2	1	Poland	Berry
"	10	93	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson et al
Rough-legged Hawk	6	1	Hamburg Hawkwatch	Watson
Peregrine Falcon	<u>27</u>	2 ad, 2 imm	Buffalo	Burch
Sora	9	3	Tiff NP	Bogacki et al (BOS)
"	28	1	Machias	DeSha
<u>Sandhill Crane</u>	1	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna et al
"	12	3	Westfield	Morgante
* Semipalmated Plover	<u>2F</u>	1	Hartland	D'Anna
"	14; 19	1; 42	Iroquois NWR	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Lesser Yellowlegs	8; 9	19; 6	Batavia WWTP; Tifft NP	Watson; Watson et al
"	9; 15	2; 1	Iroquois NWR; Batavia WWTP	Morgante
Solitary Sandpiper	1; 7	1; 1	Poland	Berry
Spotted Sandpiper	3; 14	1; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	8	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Upland Sandpiper	30	2	Tillman WMA	S&T O'Donnell
Whimbrel	22	2; 56	Rock Pt. PP: Ft. Erie	Watson, Pawlicki
"	23	3	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
Ruddy Turnstone	22	4	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Sanderling	29	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
* Semipalm. Sandpiper	<u>2F</u>	11	Randolph	DeSha
"	8	23	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
* Least Sandpiper	8F; 9	2; 2	Batavia WWTP; Times Beach	Watson; Watson et al
"	9; 15	4; 35	Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	19	76	Batavia WWTP	Watson
White-r. Sandpiper	31	6	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
Dunlin	2	1	Randolph	DeSha
"	19	19	Batavia WWTP	Watson
* Short-b. Dowitcher	9F	3	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	11	2	Iroquois NWR	Holmes
Wilson's Phalarope	21	2	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
"	23	2	Smithville	Yoerg, Henderson
Little Gull	4L	1	Buffalo	Hess
Bonaparte's Gull	4	500	Niagara River/Lewiston	Yonker
Lesser Black-b. Gull	<u>29L</u>	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Caspian Tern	8	12	Evans	Morgante
"	9	1	Tifft NP	Watson et al
"	22	9; 7	Rock Pt. PP; Morgan's Pt.	Watson, Pawlicki
Black Tern	8	1; 2	Batavia WWTP; Iroquois NWR vicinity	Watson
"	9	3	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	15	4; 1	Oak Orchard WMA; Batavia WWTP	Morgante
"	30	3; 6	Tonawanda WMR; Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
* Black-billed Cuckoo	11F	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon
"	11; 12	1; 1	Lancaster; Westfield	Morgante
* Yellow-billed Cuckoo	13F	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	18; 29	1; 1	Orchard Park; Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
"	21; 26	5; 4	Amherst SP	Yoerg
* Common Nighthawk	13F	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	18	1	Niagara Falls	S&T O'Donnell
* Ruby-t. Hummingbird	1F	1	Colden	K Landau
"	2; 8	1; 2	Alfred	Brooks
"	2	1	Eden	Andrle
Red-headed Wdpkr.	1	2	Lake Erie SP	Moshers et al
"	1	2	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	2	1	Goat I.	Potter
"	8	2	Youngstown	Landon
"	8	4; 1	Evangola SP; Wendt Beach SP	Morgante
"	14	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	21	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter
"	22	1	Ft. Erie	Watson, Pawlicki
* Eastern Wood-Pewee	12F	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
* Yellow-b. Flycatcher	12F	1	Goat I.	Roberson
"	26	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	29	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
* Alder Flycatcher	15F	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	27	1	Stockton	Watson, Pawlicki
* Willow Flycatcher	15F	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	15F	1	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	2	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	22	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	22	1	Poland	Berry
* Least Flycatcher	6F	1	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk
"	6F; 9	1; 2	Tifft NP	Watson; Watson et al
"	7	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Gr. Cr. Flycatcher	1	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	1	1	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	1	1	Poland	Berry
* Eastern Kingbird	1F	1	Poland	Berry
"	6; 9	1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson; Watson et al
* White-eyed Vireo	<u>1F</u>	1	Tifft NP	Zebehazy
"	9	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	11,18	1	Wethersfield	D&S Junkin, K&J Fox
"	18;19; <u>28</u>	1	Jamestown	Morse, Berry
* Yellow-thr. Vireo	2F; 19	1; 1	Tifft NP; Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	9	4	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Warbling Vireo	1; 2	1; 2	Buckhorn I. SP; Tifft NP	Watson
"	1	1	Poland	Berry
* Philadelphia Vireo	10F; 14	1; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	10F	2	Tifft NP	Potter et al
"	21	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	22	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	23	1	Goat I.	Roberson
* Red-eyed Vireo	<u>1F</u>	1	Goat I.	D'Anna et al
"	<u>1F</u>	1	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	10	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Common Raven	30	2	<u>Ellington</u>	Morgante
Bank Swallow	8	15	Sturgeon Pt.	Morgante
"	8	<u>900</u>	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	9	5	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
Cliff Swallow	1	18	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Carolina Wren	1	1	Jamestown	Berry
"	9	1	Tifft NP	Watson et al
"	21	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter
"	30	1	Hamburg	Morgante
* <u>Sedge Wren</u>	30F	1	Tonawanda WMA	S. O'Donnell et al



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* Marsh Wren	4F; 28	2; 5	Machias	DeSha
"	9	5	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	9	1	Tifft NP	Watson et al
Golden-cr. Kinglet	1;8;29;30	2;2;1;4	Ward	Brooks
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	22L	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson, Pawlicki
* Veery	7F	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	7F	1	Poland	Berry
"	8	1	Evangola SP	Morgante
Gray-cheeked Thrush	9F	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	18; 19	2; 1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	25	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	21; 26L	1; 2	Amherst SP	Yoerg
* Swainson's Thrush	9F; 12	1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	10	2	Tifft NP	Potter et al
"	11	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	23L	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
Hermit Thrush	6L	1	Tifft NP	Watson
* Wood Thrush	1F	1; 2	Ward; Goat I.	Brooks; D'Anna et al
"	1F	1; 1	Pt. Gratiot; Poland	Yoerg, Henderson; Berry
"	1F; 6	2; 1	Buckhorn I. SP; Tifft NP	Watson
"	2	1	Niagara Falls	Roberson
Northern Mockingbird	25	1	Cheektowaga	Morgante
"	26	1	Lyndon	DeSha
Brown Thrasher	1	6	Goat I.	D'Anna et al
"	1	2	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	1	1	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
American Pipit	8L	20	Evangola SP	Morgante
"	8L	6	Shelby	S&T O'Donnell
Blue-winged Warbler	1	5	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
* Golden-wing. Warbler	6F	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	7; 9	2; 1	Beaver I. SP; Tifft NP	Watson; Watson et al
"	10	1	Tifft NP	Potter et al
"	15; 19	1; 1	Barre	Morgante; Watson
"	29	1	Hartland	Watson, Pawlicki
"	30	2	Shelby	S&T O'Donnell
* Brewster's Warbler	10F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	15	1	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	27	1	Stockton	Watson, Pawlicki
* <u>Lawrence's Warbler</u>	2F; 3	1; 1	East Otto	Cooney; DeSha
* Tennessee Warbler	10F	2; 1	Sinking Ponds; Tifft NP	Holmes; Potter et al
"	11; 21	1; 1	Lancaster; Orchard Park	Morgante
* Orange-cr. Warbler	1F	1	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	6	1	Beaver I. SP	Lazarczyk et al
"	7; 11	2; 1	Beaver I. SP; Tifft NP	Watson et al; Watson
"	22L	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon, Yonker
* Northern Parula	1F	1	Goat I.	Potter et al
"	1F	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Potter, D'Anna
"	7;8	1; 2	Pomfret	Moshers, Farver
"	8; 9	1; 1	Evangola SP; Batavia WWTP	Morgante
* Chestnut-s. Warbler	1F	2	Goat I.	Potter et al
"	2	2	Tifft NP	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* Magnolia Warbler	6F; 9	1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson; Watson et al
"	7	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
* Cape May Warbler	2F	1	Golden Hill SP	D'Anna
"	6	5	Goat I.	Lazarczyk et al
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	1	1	Goat I.	Potter et al
"	1	1	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
Yellow-r. Warbler	8	25	Evangola SP	Morgante
Blackburnian Warbler	2; 30	1; 5	Ward	Brooks
Pine Warbler	<u>29</u>	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
* Prairie Warbler	7F	1	Beaver I. SP	Watson et al
"	9; 23L	1; 2	Almond; Andover	Brooks
"	11	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Yonker
Palm Warbler	8; 12L	10; 1	Evangola SP; Westfield	Morgante
* Bay-breasted Warbler	7F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	22L	1	Ft. Niagara SP	Landon, Yonker
"	22L	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
* Blackpoll Warbler	<u>1F</u>	1	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	13 - 28	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	29L	1	Boston	Morgante
* Cerulean Warbler	7F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	9	1	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
"	30	3	Iroquois NWR vicinity	Yoerg, Henderson
* Black-and-white Warb.	1F; 7	1; 1	Buckhorn I. SP; Beaver I. SP	Watson
"	6	1	Goat I.	Lazarczyk et al
American Redstart	1	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	2	1	Poland	Berry
* Prothonotary Warbler	30F	3 (2 @ n)	Tonawanda WMR	Yoerg, Henderson
* <u>Worm-eating Warbler</u>	1	1	Fort Niagara SP	D'Anna et al
* Ovenbird	2F; 30	1; 3	Ward	Brooks
"	2	1	Poland	Berry
Northern Waterthrush	2	1	Randolph	DeSha
* Mourning Warbler	9F; 15	1; 1	Tonawanda WMA	Morgante
Common Yellowthroat	1	3	Buckhorn I. SP; Tifft NP	Watson
"	1	2	Pt. Gratiot	Yoerg, Henderson
"	1	1	Poland	Berry
* Hooded Warbler	6F; 12; 13	1; 1; 2	Tifft NP	Watson
"	10; 14	1; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
* Wilson's Warbler	10F	1	Tifft NP	Potter et al
"	11	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
"	30L	1	Goat I.	Roberson
* Canada Warbler	10F	2	Tifft NP	Potter et al
"	11	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Holmes
"	11	1	Amherst SP	Yoerg
* Scarlet Tanager	1F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	2	1	Carlton	D'Anna
* <u>Clay-col. Sparrow</u>	2	1	Golden Hill SP	D'Anna
"	7	1(f)	Lancaster	Morgante
Vesper Sparrow	29	1	Ridgeway	Watson, Pawlicki
"	31	1	Andover	Brooks
Grasshopper Sparrow	22	1	Pt. Colborne	Watson
"	30	2	Tillman WMA	S&T O'Donnell



<u>Species</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
* Henslow's Sparrow	9F	3	Lancaster	Morgante
* Lincoln's Sparrow	1F	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	6; 9; 12	1; 1; 1	Tifft NP	Watson et al
"	7; 8	1; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	8	1	Amherst SP	S&T O'Donnell
"	10	5	Tifft NP	Potter et al
"	11	1	Lancaster	Morgante
"	23L	1	Allegheny SP	DeSha
White-thr. Sparrow	1 - 8	2 (f)	Youngstown	Landon, Yonker
"	6	1 (f)	Niagara Falls	Roberson
"	11	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	24L	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle
* <u>Harris's Sparrow</u>	14-16; 17	1; 1	West Seneca	Swiatek, S O'Donnell et al
White-cr. Sparrow	21L	1	Porter	D'Anna, Potter
Rose-br. Grosbeak	1	2	Goat I.	D'Anna et al
"	1; 2	3; 3	Buckhorn I. SP; Tifft NP	Watson
* Indigo Bunting	<u>1F</u>	1	Goat I.	Potter, D'Anna
"	8	1	Evangola SP	Morgante
* <u>Painted Bunting</u>	12	1	Tifft NP	N & P Vigyikan
Bobolink	1	1	Ripley Hawkwatch	Yoerg, Henderson
"	7	1	Poland	Berry
* Orchard Oriole	8F	1	<u>Sturgeon Pt.</u>	Morgante
"	9	1	Somerset	D'Anna
"	9	5	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	21	1	Fort Niagara SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	Golden Hill SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	22	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
"	23	1; 2	Dunnville; Smithville	Yoerg, Henderson
Pine Siskin	1	2; 1; 1	Pt. Gratiot; Chautauqua; Westfield	Yoerg, Henderson
"	4	1	Colden	J&K Landau
"	8 - 13	10 (f)	Youngstown	Landon, Yonker
"	11; 12	1; 2	Orchard Park; Westfield	Morgante
"	21	1 (f)	Youngstown	Landon, Yonker
"	21	1	Fort Niagara SP	D'Anna, Potter

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year:** 192

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month including May Count:** 072

**Total for the year 2004:** 264

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.



## Tifft Nature Preserve Field Trip

by Bill Watson

The morning of Sunday, May 9th was wet, cold, and gloomy with a quarter inch of rain falling in the early morning and a temperature of 44°F. Only seven birders showed up at the parking lot at Tifft Nature Preserve, and it was obvious that many people had looked out the window in the morning, and gone back to bed. Ironically, this is the type of weather that makes for great birding. The rain and north winds produce a fall-out of migrants, that are unable to navigate in the inclement weather.

Under the capable leadership of Bill Bogacki we left the parking lot and proceeded to Mosquito Junction Board Walk, where we quickly acquired 52 species of birds. Perched on the electrical wires next to the Visitor Center were Tree, Barn, Northern Rough-winged and Bank Swallows, and best of all five Cliff Swallows. On Mosquito Junction Board Walk there were warblers everywhere! Yellow-rumped Warblers seemed to adorn every tree, where they were accompanied by Palm Warblers with bobbing tails, Nashville Warblers with bright yellow under parts, Common Yellow-throats with black masks, Chestnut-sided Warblers with golden crowns and wing bars, Blackburnian Warblers with fiery orange-red throats and breasts, Black-throated Green Warblers with yellow cheeks, a singing Ovenbird and a Black-and-white Warbler climbing the side of a tree. In the adjacent Berm Marsh were Solitary Sandpiper, Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot and singing Marsh Wrens, Sora, and Swamp Sparrows.

By 9:30 the intermittent light drizzle had ended for the last time, but the plethora of birds continued. Along Old Tifft we found a beautiful Magnolia Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Chimney Swifts, Least Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Baltimore Oriole, and Red-bellied Woodpecker. Also at this location Jim Pawlicki heard the song of a Connecticut Warbler close to the location where one was seen a day or so earlier.

On Snakeroot Trail there was a handsome Great Crested Flycatcher, a regal Golden-winged Warbler (which was better observed later at the south end of Rabbit Run) a singing Cape May Warbler, and the ruby jewel of the forest, a Scarlet Tanager. On Heritage Boardwalk there was a Blue-winged Teal and two Wood Ducks. Along Rabbit Run we added Purple Martin to complete the swallows and a Belted Kingfisher carrying food. Since kingfisher nestling dates are from June 8th to July 14th it is likely that the food

was for courtship rather than young. At Lisa Pond there was a pair of Green-winged Teals and our first Eastern Kingbird. The way back to the Visitor Center was highlighted by a Veery, a Brown Thrasher, a Blue-headed Vireo, an American Red-start and our only raptor, an American Kestrel that fell from the sky (probably after catching a small bird or large insect.)

At Times Beach we added Double-crested Cormorant, Great Black-backed Gull, Killdeer, Common Tern, Lesser and Greater Scaup, Least Sandpiper, as well as additional Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpipers, and another Solitary Sandpiper.

We ended the half-day field trip with 19 warbler species, five shorebird species, six swallow species, and a total of 92 species. This is the most species I can recall on the annual early May Tifft field trip. The next highest species count I am aware of was 87 species on the Sunday, May 11, 1987, on a Tifft and Times Beach field trip. The unusually high number of warblers and migrants can be explained by the unusual weather. Between April 24th and May 9th, 14 of the 15 days had winds with a southern component. Only May 7th averaged northwest winds. The persistent southerly winds over a long period of time not only provided an assist to migrating birds but also produced a sustained period of warm temperatures resulting in early development of vegetation and insects. This provides the necessary food for the early migrating birds. This and the fall-out of migrants caused by the rainy weather resulted in the profusion and variety of bird species.

### Natureview Park: Amherst, NY May 30

*Jim Pawlicki (leader) submitted by Gerald Lazarczyk*

This was the walk from Hell. It was wet and rainy. Our morning meeting location was at the end of a long and rough drive on a pothole filled road. Mosquitoes were present in unbelievable numbers. In spite of the rain and mosquitoes our leader Jim Pawlicki started finding birds before the rest of us shook the cobwebs from our binoculars. In the parking area was Ruby-throated Hummingbird, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Wood Peewee, Wood Thrush, Common Nighthawk, and Scarlet Tanager. We still had not left the parking lot. The mosquitoes continued to attack with unbearable ferocity. We trudged onward nonetheless and found a number of different species including: American Goldfinch, Baltimore Oriole, Great Crested Flycatcher, American Redstart, and Chestnut-sided Warbler, Red Bellied Woodpecker, Hairy and



Downy Woodpeckers, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellow Warbler, Ovenbird, Alder and Willow Flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Cedar Waxwing, House Wren, and Great Blue Heron. As the morning air warmed Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures were seen soaring.

In relatively open (edge) habitat we found Tree Swallow, Brown-headed Cowbird, Indigo Bunting, Field Sparrow, Bank Swallow, Blue-winged Warbler, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

And then there were the wildflowers: Sweetflag, Dames Rocket, the invasive Garlic Mustard, Yellow Hawkweed, Yellow Iris, Common Plantain, Path Rush, Tall Buttercup, Red Clover, Goatsbeard, a Fleabane, Ox-eye Daisy, Yarrow, and Tall Meadowrue. Followed by: Barberry, Spicebush, Mayapple, Lesser Stitchwort, Field Hawkweed, Tall Meadow Rue, and Swamp Buttercup.

There was a Moth: Hummingbird Clearwing (*Hemaris thysbe*)

And there were some Butterflies: Comma, Viceroy (*Limenitis archippus*), Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio glaucus*), Little Wood Satyr (*Megisto cymela*), White Admiral (*Limenitis arthemis*), Wood Nymph, Pearl Crescent (*Phyciodes campestris*), and a common Ringlet (*Ceononympha tullia*).

Our final census included 7,063,594,983 Mosquitoes.

## Adirondak Bird Festival Trip

*submitted by Gerald Lazarczyk*

The six group members were Mike Galas, Mike Hamilton, Gail Seamans, Tom Connare, Don Robison and Jerry Lazarczyk. The Group stayed in Saranac Lake NY. Weather was often-threatening and there were plenty of the famous Adirondak black flies. Mike Galas was the big winner losing flesh. On Friday evening a lecture by retired NYS DEC naturalist and author of "The Natural History of the Adirondaks" included a half-hour question and answer period. Ten of ten targeted species were recorded (Boreal Chickadee, Gray Jay, Black-backed Woodpecker, Spruce Grouse, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Lincoln Sparrow, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Bicknell's Thrush, and Palm Warbler). A super trip.

6/3/04 – Thursday drive from Buffalo NY on I-90

Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tree Swallow, Ring-bill Gull, Red Tail Hawk, House Sparrow, Turkey Vulture, Mallard, Red-winged Blackbird, European Starling, American Crow,

American Robin, Mourning Dove, American Kestrel, Great Blue Heron, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Rock Pigeon, Montezuma swamp -

Osprey, Spotted Sandpiper, American Coot, Canada, Goose, Wood Duck,

Oneida county -

Common Raven,

Herkimer county -

Blue Jay, Grackle, Mourning Dove, Ragged Robin wildflower

Ferd's Bog, Inlet NY – heavy rain squall just before entry

Bunchberry plant, Boreal Chickadee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Lincoln Sparrow, Gray Jay, Golden Crowned Kinglet, Tree Swallow, Pitcher plant

6/4/05 Friday Inlet NY – hot weather

Robin, Crow,

Ferd's Bog, Inlet NY –

Broad-winged Hawk, Lincoln Sparrow, Black-capped Chickadee, Boreal Chickadee, Bluebird, Eastern Phoebe, Common Yellowthroat, Golden Crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly, Green frog, Common Merganser, Chimney Swift, Wood Thrush, Canada Goose

Franklin county –

Common Raven, Mallard, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, American Robin, Canada Goose, Red-winged Blackbird, Tree Swallow, Common Grackle, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

6/5/04 Saturday Saranac Lake NY

Cedar Waxwing

Bloomingtondale Swamp –

Chipping Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Parula, Purple Finch, Great Blue Heron, Blue-headed Vireo, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow Sapsucker, Black-capped Chickadee, Common Yellowthroat, European Starling, Mourning Dove, American Robin,

Oregon Plains Rd. -

Yellow-rumped Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Alder Flycatcher, Mourning Dove, Black-throated Green Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco, Black-billed Cuckoo, Warbling Vireo, Ovenbird, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Blue Jay, American Crow, Ring-billed Gull, Belted Kingfisher

Whiteface Mountain, Lake Placid NY –

White Throated Sparrow, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco, Red Bellied Woodpecker, Bicknell's Thrush 10:50:9:57 AM and re-sighted 11:07 AM – middle switchback - below parking lot, Red-tailed Hawk, Turkey Vulture

Bloomingtondale Rd. – Bloomingtondale Swamp

Black-backed Woodpecker – male and female, Blue-headed Vireo, Broad-winged Hawk, Canada Goose, Mallard, Rock Pigeon,

Ferd's Bog –

Pink Lady Slipper orchid, Bluebird, Swamp Sparrow, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Wood Thrush

6/6/04 Sunday Saranac Lake NY (cooler weather)

Common Grackle, American Crow, Cedar Waxwing, Mallard Red-winged Blackbird

Franklin county –

Magnolia Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Palm Warbler

Kildare NY –

Spruce Grouse male, then Gail almost ran over a Spruce Grouse hen that was dusting on the road, Arctic Skipper butterfly, Common Loon, Common Raven, Turkey Vulture, House Sparrow, Hairy Woodpecker, Tree Swallow, Bluebird, Swamp Sparrow, Boreal Chickadee, Nashville Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, Olive-sided Flycatcher, White-throated Sparrow, Turkey Vulture, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Barred Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker male at 8 ft.



# 68<sup>th</sup> Buffalo Ornithological Society May Bird Count

May 16, 2004

## Weather Synopsis

(provided by National Weather Service, Buffalo, NY\*)

Sunrise: 05:51 EDT      Sunset: 20:33 EDT

Time (EDT)	Weather	Temp (F)	Dew Pt. (F)	Pressure (inches Hg)	Wind (mph)
12:00 am	Cloudy	50	49	30.27	VR5
3:00 am	Cloudy	47	40	30.28	W3
6:00 am	Cloudy	47	40	30.30	Calm
9:00 am	Cloudy	49	42	30.34	VR3
12:00 pm	Cloudy	53	42	30.36	S9
3:00 pm	Mostly Sunny	56	46	30.34	SW10
6:00 pm	Mostly Sunny	58	45	30.34	SW6
9:00 pm	Mainly Clear	52	45	30.33	S6

Daily Weather Summary:                      Max Temp. 58 F                      Min. Temp. 40 F                      Precipitation 0.00

\*The weather synopsis was provided by Terry Yonker.

## Compilation

The following is a list of species seen on the count followed by the total number observed. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers appear in parentheses. Boldface names indicate species for which acceptable written verifications were received. F and L represent the first and last dates for the spring migration. \* represents the first record for the year.

<u>Species</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Section</u>			
<b>Loons-Ducks</b>			American Black Duck	5	(2,10)
Red-throated Loon	1	(5)	Mallard	891	
Common Loon	30		Blue-winged Teal	18	
Pied-billed Grebe	31		Northern Shoveler	36	(10)
Horned Grebe	7	(4,13,21)	Northern Pintail	2	(23)
Double-crested Cormorant	2892		Green-winged Teal	1	(2)
American Bittern	2	(5,10)	Redhead	5	(10)
*Least Bittern	4	(2,5,11)	Ring-necked Duck	2	(13)
Great Blue Heron	617		Greater Scaup	9	
Great Egret	44		Lesser Scaup	13	
* <b>Snowy Egret</b>	1	(1)	unidentified Scaup	1	
Green Heron	65		White-winged Scoter	36	(4,5)
Black-crowned Night-Heron	35		Long-tailed Duck	50	(4,5)
Turkey Vulture	347		Bufflehead	37	
Canada Goose	4515		Common Goldeneye	1	(5)
Mute Swan	12		Hooded Merganser	26	
Tundra Swan	3	(10,13,16)	Common Merganser	29	
Wood Duck	162		Red-breasted Merganser	1558	
Gadwall	10	(2,6,7)	Ruddy Duck	66	
American Wigeon	18	(13)	waterfowl species	5	



## Raptors-Coots

Osprey	20	
Bald Eagle	15	
Northern Harrier	23	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	18	
Cooper's Hawk	14	
Red-shouldered Hawk	16	
Broad-winged Hawk	9	
Red-tailed Hawk	242	
Rough-legged Hawk	1	(6)
American Kestrel	61	
Peregrine Falcon	1	(11)
Ring-necked Pheasant	23	
Ruffed Grouse	13	
Wild Turkey	89	
Virginia Rail	8	(3,5,11)
Sora	16	
Common Moorhen	13	
American Coot	43	

## Plovers-Terns

*Black-bellied Plover	21	(6)
Semipalmated Plover	240	
Killdeer	452	
Greater Yellowlegs	12	
Lesser Yellowlegs	29	
Solitary Sandpiper	25	
Spotted Sandpiper	160	
*Upland Sandpiper F	4	(2,5,10)
*Whimbrel F	1	(6)
*Ruddy Turnstone F	10	(5,6)
Semipalmated Sandpiper	14	
*Sanderling F	1	(6)
Least Sandpiper	333	
*White-rumped Sandpiper F	1	(21)
Pectoral Sandpiper	2	(5,21)
Dunlin	436	
Short-billed Dowitcher--33	13	
Wilson's Snipe	25	
American Woodcock	25	
*Wilson's Phalarope F	3	(1)
unspecified shorebirds	16	
Bonaparte's Gull	376	
Ring-billed Gull	35221	
Herring Gull	467	
Great Black-backed Gull	79	
Iceland Gull	1	(7)
Caspian Tern	189	
Common Tern	321	
Black Tern	28	(5,10)

## Doves-Swallows

Rock Pigeon	1443	
Mourning Dove	2014	
Black-billed Cuckoo	25	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	15	
Barn Owl	1	(28)
Eastern Screech-Owl	7	
Great Horned Owl	13	
Barred Owl	12	
Common Nighthawk	7	(20,21)
Chimney Swift	546	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	247	
Belted Kingfisher	87	

Red-headed Woodpecker	27	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	183	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	56	
Downy Woodpecker	248	
Hairy Woodpecker	76	
Northern Flicker	287	
Pileated Woodpecker	32	
*Olive-sided Flycatcher F	1	(14)
Eastern Wood Pewee	51	
*Acadian Flycatcher F	3	(5,12,13)
Alder Flycatcher	9	
Willow Flycatcher	56	
Least Flycatcher	34	
unidentified empidonax	2	
Eastern Phoebe	217	
Great Crested Flycatcher	216	
Eastern Kingbird	297	
White-eyed Vireo	1	(11)
Yellow-throated Vireo	23	
Blue-headed Vireo	24	
Warbling Vireo	338	
Philadelphia Vireo	12	
Red-eyed Vireo	493	
Blue Jay	1115	
American Crow	1743	
Common Raven	11	(18,19,28)
Horned Lark	18	
Purple Martin	570	
Tree Swallow	2577	
No. Rough-winged Swallow	518	
Bank Swallow	589	
Cliff Swallow	212	
Barn Swallow	2512	

## Chickadees-Waxwings

Black-capped Chickadee	763	
Tufted Titmouse	143	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	29	
White-breasted Nuthatch	183	
Brown Creeper	20	
Carolina Wren	27	
House Wren	378	
Winter Wren	2	(16,24)
Marsh Wren	77	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	7	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3	(5,7,20)
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	55	
Eastern Bluebird	176	
Veery	127	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	4	
Swainson's Thrush	10	
Hermit Thrush	21	
Wood Thrush	439	
American Robin	4823	
Gray Catbird	1175	
Northern Mockingbird	20	
Brown Thrasher	47	
European Starling	5518	
American Pipit	48	(5)
Cedar Waxwing	194	
Warblers		
Blue-winged Warbler	123	



Golden-winged Warbler	5	(4,5,13)
<b>"Brewster's Warbler"</b>	2	(3,13)
<b>"Lawrence's Warbler"</b>	1	(18)
Tennessee Warbler	21	
Nashville Warbler	13	
Northern Parula	3	(11,20)
Yellow Warbler	2340	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	155	
Magnolia Warbler	91	
Cape May Warbler	7	
Black-throated Blue Warbler	37	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	104	
Black-throated Green Warbler	73	
Blackburnian Warbler	52	
Pine Warbler	12	
Prairie Warbler	5	(18,20)
Palm Warbler	4	
Bay-breasted Warbler	32	
Blackpoll Warbler	160	
Cerulean Warbler	16	(7,11)
Black-and-white Warbler	28	
American Redstart	269	
Ovenbird	199	
Northern Waterthrush	25	
Louisiana Waterthrush	5	
Mourning Warbler	25	
Common Yellowthroat	931	
Hooded Warbler	125	
Wilson's Warbler	4	(3,5,21)
Canada Warbler	20	
<b>Yellow-throated Warbler</b>	1	(3)
warbler species	3	
<b>Tanagers-Sparrows</b>		
Scarlet Tanager	100	
Eastern Towhee	120	
Chipping Sparrow	966	
<b>Clay-colored Sparrow</b>	2	(3)
Field Sparrow	147	
Vesper Sparrow	4	(5,6,27)
Savannah Sparrow	302	
*Grasshopper Sparrow F	5	(4,10)
Henslow's Sparrow	1	(12)
Song Sparrow	1873	
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	(5)
Swamp Sparrow	195	
White-throated Sparrow	25	
White-crowned Sparrow	94	
<b>Harris's Sparrow</b>	1	(11)
unidentified sparrow	1	
Dark-eyed Junco	152	
Northern Cardinal	1014	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	557	
Indigo Bunting	157	
Bobolink	1009	
Red-winged Blackbird	6535	
Eastern Meadowlark	192	
Rusty Blackbird	31	(3,10,13)
Common Grackle	3866	
Brown-headed Cowbird	999	
<b>Orchard Oriole</b>	8	(2,3,6)
Baltimore Oriole	1275	
Purple Finch	189	

House Finch	353	
Pine Siskin	18	(19,27,28)
American Goldfinch	2647	
Evening Grosbeak	1	(27)
House Sparrow	1941	
unidentified birds	9	

**Total Species Observed: 217**

**Total Individual Birds Observed: 115,864**

#### **Notable Count Highs:**

The number of species (217) is the largest ever observed on the May count since it started in 1935. The number of individuals (115,864) is also the largest total on the May count. Eighteen individual species were recorded at their highest total ever: Pied-billed Grebe (31), Double-crested Cormorant (2892), Great Blue Heron (617), Great Egret (44), Canada Goose (4515), Northern Sholver (36), Red-breasted Merganser (1558), Red-tailed Hawk (242), Semipalmated Plover (240), Least Sandpiper (333), Ring-billed Gull (35,221), Mourning Dove (2014), Red-bellied Woodpecker (183), Warbling Vireo (338), Gray Catbird (1175), Yellow Warbler (2340), Pine Warbler (12), and Northern Cardinal (1014). Several other species also were recorded at their second highest total since the count began.

#### **Notable Species:**

Harris's Sparrow, second record on the May count. Yellow-throated Warbler, fifth record on the May count. Iceland Gull, second record on May count and the second year in a row. Snowy Egret, the second record on the May count.

#### **Notable Count Lows:**

Due to the large overall numbers of individuals, few species were recorded in very low numbers: Vesper Sparrow (4) was tied for the second lowest recorded on the May count.

#### **Observers (Section compliers in boldface.)**

**Section 1:** David Cooper, Art Hannah, Lynne Landon, Terry Yonker

**Section 2:** Brian Ahara, Paul Benham, **John Black**, Brad Clemments, Kayo Roy, Katherine Stoltz

**Section 3:** Edward Crohn, Jerry J. Farrell, Julie Horne, Patricia Kornacker, **Donald Roberson**, Timothy Simon, Nick Sly, Mary Ann Stegmeier, John Welte, Martha Welte, Bruce Zahno, Kim Zahno, Willie D'Anna, Betsy Potter

**Section 4:** Michelle Coblentz, Julie Eberhart, Neal Gordon, Jerry Lazarczyk, **Bill Watson**

**Section 5:** Don Brasure, Bill Burch, **Don Harris**, Morgan Jones, Robert Lipp, Jim Pawlicki

**Section 6:** **Jerry Chappell**

**Section 7:** Barbara Byron, Richard Byron, Ed Fuchs, **Mike Hamilton**, Jim Rozanski, Liz Wells

**Section 8:** Doug Happ, **Mike Zebehazy**

**Section 9:** Tom Bearss, Willie D'Anna, Mike Galas, Sylvia Galas, Ron Hacker, Sue Hacker, Eric Lobato, Debra Milleville, Betsy Potter, **Gary Rising**, Chuck Rosenburg, May Kate Sidoti, Joe Stein, Marlene Szuromi



**Section 10:** Donna DeLeon, Emma DeLeon, **Robert L. DeLeon**, Don Harris

**Section 11:** Dennis Gralak, Barbara Henderson, Jane Hayer, Marie Johnson, Alice McKale, Tom O'Connell, **Susan O'Donnell**, Thomas O'Donnell, Marilyn Pecoraro O'Connell, Margaret Stewart, Francine Swiatek, Theodore P. Swiatek, Peter Yoerg

**Section 12:** Ann M. Bauer, Marion Bee, Dick Collins, Greg Coniglio, Melissa Coniglio, Kurt Fox, Paul Fuhrmann, Tom Harper, Mahlon Miller, Mark Morgante, Mike Morgante, Marlene Phillips, Ruth Phillips, Josh Schlabach, Melody Schlabach, Nate Schlabach, **Gail Seamans**, Donna Wieand

**Section 13:** Doug Beattie, Elaine Dart, Tad Gerace, Charles Graney, Eileen Hull, Robert Hull, Aron Kehlenbeck, Zeke Kehlenbeck, **Jane Mason**, Marc Mason, **Max Mason**, Joe Salvador, Donald Thureau

**Section 14:** Ken Brandes, Joanne Dobbler, Tim Goff, Fred Harrington, Pat Madigan, Sany Radigan, Audrey Segabarth, Marg Vogel, **Barb Walker**, Margret Wooley

**Section 15:** **William Bogacki**, Dennis Russell

**Section 16:** Robert Andrie, Thomas Connare, Audrey Horbett, **Francis Rew**, Joseph Thill

**Section 17:** John Filor, Chris Marcello, **Robert Wagner**

**Section 18:** **Bruce Chilton**, Mike Desha, Jim Landau, Karen Landau

**Section 19:** Ron Andrews, Leora Arnold, Linda Baehr, Faye Clancy, Barbara Cronk, Gladys Hotchkiss, Lyle Hotchkiss, Dora Lilly, Carlton MacEwan, Joan MacEwan, Louise Mills, Cindy Moyles, John Raybuck, Michael Raybuck, Teresa Rork, **Elaine Smith**, Marian Smith, Wilma Saylor, Billie Talbott, Jim Talbott, Ann Vaclavik, Ann Voss, Jay Wilson, Jean Wilson, **Larry Wilson**, Richard Wilson, Roseanna Wilson

**Section 20:** Karen Brisley, Ken Brisley, Chris Budniewski, Ray Budniewski, Sylvia Clark, **Paul Farver**, Joanne Goetz, Tom Goetz, Joe Gula, Carol Hardenburg, Terry Mahoney, Richard Miga, Terry Mosher, Lucille Neveu, Bob Peterson, Beverly Ruska, John Ruska, Audrey Schafer, Ted Taft, Jordan Whitney

**Section 21:** Jim Berry, Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Jessie Nelson, Joanne Nelson, Linda O'Brien, Bill Seleen, **Bob Sundell**

**Section 22:** **Ann Beebe**, Ranjit Laha, Linda O'Brien, May Richardson, **Bob Sundell**

**Section 23:** Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Steven Maggio Jean Pigman, Thomas Simmons, **Bob Sundell**

**Section 24:** **Tim Baird**

**Section 25:** **Tim Baird**, Stephan W. Eaton, Jeff Reed, Vicki Schwentner, James Van Scoy, Regina Van Scoy

**Section 26:** **Doris Burton**, Mary Jordan, Ann Scott, Morris Scott, Bob Smalley, Bruce Smalley, Zac Smalley, Denton Willett

**Section 27:** **Doris Burton**, Norman Ives, Helen Link, Marie Paxhia

**Section 28:** Dan Babcock, Ellen Baker, Carol Behn, Warren Bouck, Wayne Brewster, Don Brink, Lorna Brink, Judy Broad, Betsy Brooks, Debbie Bucholtz, **Ken Burdick**, **Doris Burton**, Mary Lou Cartledge, Dale Coats, **Diane Converso**, Tina Cornell, Elsie Cushing, Audrey Dunham, Anne Eisenhardt, Jamie Eisenhardt, Peg Eisenhardt, Keegan Fleming, Peter Finlay, Terry Finlay, John Gradoni, Geri Hills, Ralph Hills, Betty Kellog, Wayne Kellog, Woodie Lange, Barry Lash, Martha Lash, Michelle Lehmann, Marion McClure, Cathy

MacDonald, Mary Ormsby, Lyle Palmiter, Thelma Palmiter, Ann Pipal, Bob Pipal, Vivian Pitzrick, Evelyn Ramsey, Nicole Ramsey, Dan Rase, Peggy Rase, Jim Smith, Maureen Soule, Terah Soule, Conner Stephens, Wilma Taggart, Abbey Timbrook, Tim Timbrook, Linda Travers, Cindy Vance, Gerry Vance, Mary Lu Wells, **Suzanne Wood**

**Total number of observers: 258**

#### **Verification report submission**

Rare and out of normal season birds, that is those requiring a verification report as per the BOS "Verification Date Guide", are not added to the count unless a verification report is submitted. This year and every other year several species were not recorded because the appropriate verification reports were not submitted. The count compilers wish to thank those people who took the time to complete verification reports: Don Roberson, Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter (Yellow-throated Warbler), Sue and Tom O'Donnell and Thomas Swiatek (Harris's Sparrow), Michael Hamilton (Iceland Gull), Brian R. Ahara and Kayo J. Roy (Snowy Egret), Nick Sly (Clay-colored Sparrow).

**Count Compilers: Robert L. DeLeon and Donna V. DeLeon**

#### *Birding Quiz Answers*

1. Greater Yellowlegs usually has a slightly upturned bill, a field mark not applicable to Lesser.
2. Lesser Yellowlegs has a shorter flight call of one to two notes (too-too). Greater Yellowlegs has a longer call typically with three to four notes and louder (tew-tew-tew).
3. Lesser Yellowlegs. Juvenile Greater Yellowlegs are more streaked.
4. Greater Yellowlegs usually arrives in mid-to-late March, a few weeks ahead of Lesser.
5. Lesser Yellowlegs. This is consistent as to why the peak of their migration is later in the spring and earlier in the fall than Greater Yellowlegs.
6. Both species have a short tails with white rump patches.
7. Both. The wings project beyond the tail on both species.
8. The species are closest to each other in comparison, but Stilt Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope (juvenile), and Solitary Sandpiper can be confused with Lesser Yellowlegs.
9. Lesser Yellowlegs. Lessers will nest above the Arctic Circle in Alaska and Yukon, much farther north in those areas than Greater. Greater Yellowlegs nests farther north than Lessers east of Hudson Bay.
10. Yes. (Except when covered by mud).



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<http://www.bosbirding.org/>

## August – September Calendar



Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

**March through August:** BOS members are encouraged to participate in the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. Contact Dick Rosche (drosche@juno.com or 716-652-8409).

**August 22: BOS August Shorebird Count.** Contact: Terry Yonker. Start at 6:30 AM. The count will cover 10 reaches of the north shore of Lake Erie from the Peace Bridge to Port Maitland. Teams of two or more will be assigned each reach. If you have questions or would like to volunteer contact Terry Yonker or Lynne Landon at 716-745-9129 or email: TerryYonker@cs.com)

**August 29: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds** (Buff-breasted Sandpiper?) and other early migrants. Leader: Mike Hamilton (716-881-6709). Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there.

**September 8: BOS Meeting.** Members' Night. Bring along your favorite stories/slides on a carousel to share. 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.



# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 7 July, 2004

### THE MONTH: June

*by Joe Thill*

June was a cool and pleasant month, the ninth coolest in the Western New York Region, with spring-like temperatures prevailing for most of the period. There was plenty of sunshine while rainfall was light, totaling just 2.02 inches, only half of the normal precipitation expected in our region for the period and the fourth consecutive month with 59% of possible sunshine, just shy of the 61% usually anticipated in June. Thirteen days were mostly sunny while only five were cloudy. The average maximum temperature for the month at Buffalo was 63.6 °F, two degrees cooler than normal but only 0.1 degree milder than last year. It was the 9th coolest June in 61 years of record keeping at the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport. The high temperature at Buffalo, 83 °F, was recorded on both the 8th and 9th while the coolest temperatures, 43 and 44 °F, were recorded respectively on the 4th and 12th. Meteorological conditions were generally mild with the only weather disturbances of interest gusty thunderstorms during the evening of June 14th in the Town of Clarence with some damage from downed trees and a peak wind gust of 47 mph at the Buffalo-Niagara

Airport causing some concern.

The month itself had an auspicious start with Doug Happ's observation of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a very rare vagrant in the northeast. It flew past his vehicle along the Lakeview Road in the Town of Hamburg in Erie County in the early evening of

June 7th. Happ, who had seen this flycatcher previously in Kansas, recognized it by its unmistakable long black and white tail that was "one and one half times the length of its body". He left his car and further observed the bird for several minutes in a leafless tree and in a long windbreak of roadside trees. Upon taking wing, the bird's definitive white head and light gray back as well as "a wash of pink" in the belly to the undertail coverts were clearly seen. It was the fourth record of this flycatcher in our study area since first reported in 1988.

Once again this June, Allegany State Park proved to be an ideal locale for some exciting warbler observations. On June 3rd, Frank Gardner, a birder from Massachusetts who was spending the month camping in the park near Red House Lake, heard a bird song that he identified as that of a Kentucky Warbler. He located the songster by its repetitive singing in dense vegetation bordering a mature mixed forest and confirmed his identification when the warbler presented itself



Willet photographed at Jones Beach in Port Weller, Ontario on June 27, 2004 by Kayo Roy.

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2005-2006	Bob DeLeon Mike Desha Jim Landau

and its diagnostic olive green mantle and lemon-yellow underparts were clearly seen. On June 28th, Bill Watson and Jim Pawlicki evoked memories of fieldwork in 1984 when two pairs of Yellow-throated Warblers were confirmed breeding in Allegany Park, the first records for New York State at that time. Since that momentous finding, individual birds of this species have been reported in small numbers, mostly males with no evidence of mated pairs. On the 28th, Watson and Pawlicki observed two warblers in the park, a mated pair busily gathering food for a young bird in a nest atop a tall spruce in a mixed deciduous and spruce woods next to the Administration Building in the Red House section of the

park. The observers were unable to classify these warblers to gender but Watson had seen this species on previous occasions in the park and in the State of Florida and identified the adult birds by their signature bright yellow throats and superciliary lines. The insect provender for feeding the young birds appeared for the most part to be newly hatched larvae. Note: Both the 1984 and this years breeding Yellow-throated Warblers were originally found by Tim Baird.

On June 15th, Bill Watson, Jim Pawlicki, and Jim Berry in the course of a visit to Roger Tory Peterson Institute in the City of Jamestown in Chautauqua County, walked through a scrubby deciduous woods on the Institute grounds where Jim Berry pointed out a nest (previously discovered by Solon Morse) at the base of a small tree "about two feet above the ground" in deep shade. Close inspection revealed the nest-tenders were about 5 inches in length with black bills, conical in shape and thicker than the bill of a warbler.

One bird had thick bright yellow spectacles contrasting with black pupils and a white iris; the top of the head and back were drab yellowish green in color. The second bird appeared to be a year older judged by bright yellow spectacles which were as conspicuous but not as thick as its congener's. The consensus of the group was that they had interrupted nesting White-eyed Vireos.

There was a brief flurry of excitement on June 27th when, in the course of atlas activity by a group of Canadian birders led by Kayo Roy of Fonthill, Ontario discovered "a large dark looking shorebird" on the Lake Ontario shoreline at Jones Beach in Port Weller, Ontario which when viewed under mostly sunny conditions proved to be an adult Willet with heavily barred neck, breast, and flanks. The consensus among listservers consulted by Roy was that this Willet was of the western race, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus*, which is usually observed in Southern Ontario and Western New York as a passage migrant in the Great Lakes Region and not its very rare (and eagerly sought) congener, *C. s. semipalmatus*, or Eastern Willet of which there is no documented record for Ontario. On June 27th, Kayo Roy also took an excellent series of photographs of this Willet which vividly portray its field marks and will undoubtedly be the subject of scrutiny in the future.

Tom O'Donnell's discovery of a pair of adult Mute Swans accompanied by eight young birds on the bank of the West Branch of the Twelve Mile Creek in Niagara County on June 5th is the first verified report of this species *successfully* breeding in that county. On July 3rd an adult Mute Swan and seven young were observed in the water under the Route 18 bridge on that creek. Wildlife biologists have expressed concern over the impact on other waterfowl by the rapid increase in numbers of this aggressive species. Note: The NYSDEC policy has been to destroy Mute Swan nests and eggs in Niagara County, a policy that has led to action since 2002.

The author wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Bob Andrie, Gerry Rising, Dave Suggs, and Bill Watson in preparation of this article.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Pied-billed Grebe	3	1	Birdsall	Brooks
"	23	1 ad + 3 yng	Tillman WMA	Morgante
D.-crested Cormorant	2; 14	118; 90	Motor I.	Watson
"	14	36 + 20 n	Strawberry I.	Watson
"	15	250	Buffalo Harbor	Burch
"	29	150	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
American Bittern	3	1	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
Least Bittern	3	1	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
Great Egret	1 - 24	2 max	Tonawanda	Hess
"	2; 14	12; 7	Motor I.	Watson
"	23	1	Tillman WMA	Morgante
"	25	21; 8	Motor I; Grand I.	Watson
Green Heron	3; 26	1; 1	Birdsall; Alfred	Brooks
Black-cr. Night-Heron	2; 14; 25	12; 7; 4	Motor I.	Watson
Mute Swan	5	2 ad+ <u>8 yng</u>	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	T O'Donnell
Wood Duck	7 - 22	1ad+10 yng	Newfane	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	26	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Lesser Scaup	26	6	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Red-br. Merganser	9	1	Tonawanda WMA	Hess
Ruddy Duck	26	98	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
Osprey	3	1	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
"	6	3 (2 nests)	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	2 (nest)	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	1 ad+1 yng	Allegany SP	Watson, Pawlicki, Hess
"	28 - 30	2 ad+4 yng	Allegany SP	Hess
Bald Eagle	6	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	9	1	Iroquois NWR	Hess
"	20	1 ad	Allegany Ind. Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
Red-shouldered Hawk	5; 20	1; 1	Alfred; Ward	Brooks
"	15	2; 1	Jamestown; Stockton	Watson, Pawlicki
"	20	2	Allegany Ind. Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
Broad-winged Hawk	5; 27	1; 1	Ward	Brooks
"	23	1	Bear Creek SF	Chilton
American Kestrel	24	2 ad + 4 yng	Hartland	Watson, Pawlicki
Peregrine Falcon	15; 21	2 ad + 2 yng	Buffalo	Burch
"	20	1	Buffalo	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Moorhen	26	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
American Coot	9	9 ad + 2 yng	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Willet	<u>27</u>	1	Port Weller, Ont.	Roy, Ahara, Smith
"	13	5	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
Upland Sandpiper	27	1	Tillman WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	2	Tillman WMA	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Wilson's Snipe	23	1	Burns	Brooks
American Woodcock	8; 14; 20	1; 1; 1+4 yng	Andover; Andover; Alfred	Brooks
Great Black-b. Gull	9	26	Woodlawn	Watson, Lazarczyk
Black Tern	3	2	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
"	9	3	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Lazarczyk, Hess
"	9	1	Tonawanda WMA	Hess
Common Nighthawk	3	1	Oak Orchard WMA	S & T O'Donnell
* Whip-poor-will	11	5	Wilson Rd., Ont.	Burch (BOS)
Red-headed Wdpkr.	12	1	Lake Erie SP	Bee
"	27	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Yellow-b. Sapsucker	29	1	East Pembroke	Seamans
Yellow-b. Flycatcher	1L	1	Ward	Brooks
Acadian Flycatcher	5	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Morgante
"	6	3	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	20	4 ad + nest	Shale Creek Preserve	Morgante
"	20	1	Allegany Ind. Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	28	1	Allegany SP	Watson, Pawlicki
* <u>Scissor-t. Flycatcher</u>	7	1	Hamburg	Happ
White-eyed Vireo	<u>15</u>	2 + nest	Jamestown	Watson
Yellow-thr. Vireo	6; 13	3; 1	Royalton	Watson
"	12	1	Ellington	Morgante
"	26	1	Wilson	Roberson
"	27	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Raven	2; 5; 6	2; 2; 2	Alfred; Almond; Ward	Brooks
"	10; 13; 20	2; 2; 4	Alfred; Ward; Ward	Brooks
"	23	1; 3; 1	Ossian; Burns; Almond	Brooks
"	23	3	Bear Creek SF	Chilton
"	25	3	<u>Ellington</u>	Morgante
"	26	2	Alfred	Brooks
Cliff Swallow	6	10	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	12	2	Ellington	Morgante
"	13	2	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
"	23	2	Tillman WMA	Morgante
"	25	80 ad + 78 nests	Tonawanda I.	Watson
"	28	5	Allegany SP	Watson
Red-br. Nuthatch	13	1	Hartland	Watson
Carolina Wren	14	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Winter Wren	6 - 27	2 max	Ward	Brooks
"	6	2	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	15	1	Stockton	Watson, Pawlicki
"	20	1	Shale Creek Preserve	Morgante
"	26	2 ad+1 imm	Concord	S & T O'Donnell
<u>Sedge Wren</u>	9	1	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	25	1	Ellington	Morgante
Northern Mockingbird	13; 22	1; 1	Hartland; Newfane	Watson
"	18; 26	1; 1	Wheatfield	Roberson
"	24	1	Cambria	Roberson
Golden-wing. Warbler	16	1	Newfane	Watson
Brewster's Warbler	15; 16	2; 1	Stockton; Newfane	Watson, Pawlicki; Watson
Northern Parula	6	8	Allegany SP	Yoerg



<u>Species</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Yellow-thr. Warbler	6	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg
"	28	2	Allegany SP	Watson
Pine Warbler	<u>5</u>	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Morgante
"	<u>28</u>	1	Allegany SP	Watson
Prairie Warbler	2 – 24	3	Andover, Alfred	Brooks
"	4	1	<u>Ellington</u>	Morgante
"	6	2	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Cerulean Warbler	6	4	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Black-and-white Warb.	6	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	15	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	20	2	Allegany Ind. Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
Prothonotary Warbler	9	1; 1	Tonawanda WMA; Iro- quois NWR	Hess
La. Waterthrush	6	2	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	20	1	Shale Creek Preserve	Morgante
"	20	2	Allegany Ind. Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
* <u>Kentucky Warbler</u>	3	1	Allegany SP	Gardner
Canada Warbler	6 – 26	2	Alfred, Allen	Brooks
"	20	2	Allegany Ind. Res.	Yoerg, Henderson
<u>Clay-col. Sparrow</u>	1 – 30	2	Andover	Brooks
Vesper Sparrow	4; 8; 10	1; 1; 1	Andover	Brooks
Grasshopper Sparrow	1 – 30	2	Andover	Brooks
"	7 - 30	1	Newfane	Watson
"	13	1; 1	Royalton; Hartland	Watson
"	22	1	Newfane	Watson
"	27	3	Tillman WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Henslow's Sparrow	27	3	Lancaster	Yoerg, Henderson
"	30	6	Lancaster	Morgante, Kandel
White-thr. Sparrow	5 – 29	4	Allegany Co.	Brooks
* <u>Red Crossbill</u>	<u>23</u>	2	Almond	Brooks
Pine Siskin	6	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	9	1	Colden	K Landau
"	<u>12</u>	2	Cherry Creek	Morgante

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year: 260**

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month including May Count: 004**

**Total for the year 2004: 264**

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.



## We Hear Whip-poor-wills and Coyotes, Too — June 11, 2004

by Bill Burch

On this, our 14th annual encounter with the Whip-poor-wills, a pack of coyotes added their voices to the mystery of the nighttime calling of the birds. This chorus came to us as we stood and waited on a quiet gravel road in nearby Ontario.

The outing began with a 7 pm dinner at the Lotus Garden in Pt. Colborne, Ontario. Present were nine BOS members and guests, and eight from the Bert Miller Nature Club. After dinner we made a short stop at the meadows of Minor Road to see Savannah Sparrows, Eastern Kingbirds and Horned Larks. Continuing three miles west on Highway 3, we turned north on Wilson Road for a mile (designated here by a side road) to the favored spot. In the gathering dusk we listened to the calls of thrushes, Gray Catbirds and Common Yellowthroats. At 9:07 pm the Whip-poor-wills began calling from the great Wainfleet Bog that lay east of the road.

The coyotes began calling around 9:20 pm. We could hear several adult calls of slightly different pitches, some starting as others finished. Accompanying this were yelping sounds, perhaps made by young coyotes. The calling lasted only a minute or so, but the whole display was repeated about five minutes later. The calling came from the SE direction, that is, from the Bog but closer to Highway 3 than we were. It was a primitive sound, one that added a little chill to the cool night.

We were pleased that our Canadian friend, Bob Chambers, was there. Bob had a spinal tumor that left him paralyzed below the waist. After four months in the hospital he now is undergoing leg therapy and is optimistic. He remained in his minivan, his wife doing the driving.

Green Frogs, last heard in 2000, again were absent. Only one firefly was noted, perhaps being discouraged by the cool evening. The clear night provided a good view of the planet Jupiter, and Terry Yonker trained his scope on it to show us four of its moons. The whips were still calling in the distance as we left at 10:00 pm. As we departed I was musing on how the coyotes related to the Eastern Massasauga of the Wainfleet Bog.

## Noteworthy Records 101

by Mike Morgante

I gave a presentation at the B.O.S. meeting on February 13, 2002 entitled "Noteworthy Records 101." My goals for the presentation were to describe the process of compiling, educate the membership on how to read and interpret the Noteworthy Records, and emphasize the importance of submitting records. This article attempts to do the same for those who were not in attendance at that meeting and to serve as a reminder for those who were there. At the time of the presentation, I was starting my seventh year as B.O.S. compiler, a position now held by Bruce Chilton.

**THE STEPS (A BASIC OVERVIEW):** Birders prepare their monthly lists and verification reports and mail or email them to the compiler early in the following month. The compiler adds records via dBase (a much outdated DOS version of dBase). The compiler uses abbreviations to make the task much less arduous. The four-digit banding code is entered for a species, along with date(s), number of birds, and abbreviations for most locations and observers. As an example, Brendan Klick's 2 Semipalmated Plovers on the 11<sup>th</sup> at Oak Orchard W.M.A. is entered as: "sepl, 11, 2, oo, kl". The abbreviations are exchanged for the proper species name, location, and observer through the use of some basic-language database routines that Dean DiTommaso wrote back in the 1980s. The records are sorted in taxonomic and date order. The compiler then does some heavy editing to summarize the entered records. At this point, the old dBase software is no longer useful and the file is opened in Microsoft database for finishing touches and printing. The compiler then reviews and underlines anything that requires a verification report. Three copies of the Noteworthy Records along with all of the monthly reports and verification reports are then mailed to the statisticians. The electronic copy of the Noteworthy Records is emailed to the editor of *The Prothonotary*, who will then make changes to the file based on the statistician revisions.

**WHAT IS NOTEWORTHY?** The question most often asked of the compiler is "What is Noteworthy?" Hearing this question a number of times from B.O.S. members convinced me to prepare the presentation. A record can be noteworthy by species, date, number, location, or a combination of features. There is not always a clear answer as to what is noteworthy, but the overwhelming majority of records meet standard crite-



ria for inclusion. While the compiler does not write about the records like the authors of "The Month" do, there is still an editorial slant as to what is included. The compiler keeps a pulse on migrations, trends, local distribution, and history and uses knowledge of these when deciding if a record is noteworthy.

**SPECIES:** A record can be noteworthy based on species for: 1) any species new for the year, 2) any species requiring a verification report according to the Verification Date Guide, or 3) compiler's 'feel'. Permanent resident species that are widespread throughout the B.O.S. Study Area such as Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, and House Sparrow are not included, unless there is an exceptional count. Common species such as Mallard and Red-tailed Hawk are typically included only if there is high migration or winter count. Records of species that are considered federally or state threatened or endangered (e.g. Bald Eagle, Upland Sandpiper, Henslow's Sparrow) and those declining in numbers or breeding populations (e.g. Red-headed Woodpecker, Golden-winged Warbler, Grasshopper Sparrow) usually are included as "noteworthy".

**DATE:** The compiler attempts to include the first two arrival records and last departure record for each migration. It is not always easy to ascertain when a record is a first (e.g. blackbirds in February could be wintering or migrating). Any record outside of the date guide ranges (requiring a verification report), or unusual/uncommon for the season (e.g. Gray Catbird in winter, Horned Grebe in summer) will be included. The B.O.S. Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region is an excellent reference for determining what is noteworthy.

The Noteworthy Records encompass only 362 days of the year. Records from the three B.O.S. count days are not included. Therefore, do not send any reports from the April, May, or October B.O.S. counts to the compiler. These records should be sent directly to the appropriate section compiler or overall count coordinator. This separated system is poor because it requires checking multiple sources of data for all records. Unfortunately, this system has been in place for decades and would not be easy to change.

Do send your sightings from CBCs and Atlas2000 project to the compiler, as these can then be included in the noteworthy records.

There is no flexibility on dates in the Date Guide. This hurts the Society's record collection when there is an "early spring" (e.g. 2001, 2004) and many spring migrants arrive ahead of schedule. When this occurs,

many reports come in without the required verification reports and the records are dropped. The same can occur, but to a much lesser degree, with a "late fall" (e.g. 2001 again), when many species linger beyond normal departure dates. The arrival/departure dates are tied to weather and as the climate changes, so do many of the dates. While the observers should submit verification reports for all early or late records, options for adding a small degree of flexibility in these cases should be considered by the statisticians for the benefit of the records database.

**NUMBER:** A record may be noteworthy solely by the count. The compiler looks for high counts. A count might be high for species, date, or location. Migration counts (hawk watches, waterfowl counts, etc.) are also sought. Generally, the highest numbers are listed.

I cannot stress enough for counts to be conservative. Birders seeing the same group of birds will often arrive at (and submit) different counts than other observers with them. In general, the larger the flock, the wider the range of estimates is. People estimate differently. Given multiple counts, I tend to use the more conservative number. If a range was submitted for a count (e.g. 40-50), I would include 40 as a conservative estimate.

Through the years, I've occasionally developed hunches on some counts that I suspected were likely overestimated. However, unless I am present to witness the same birds (usually not the case) I simply do not know the accuracy of the count. If there is an exceptionally high count or one that is significant historically, a verification report should be prepared. In such cases, the method of counting should be stressed rather than identification. For instance, if you report 12,000 Canvasbacks, prepare the report on how you arrived at such an incredible count rather than describing how you determined they were Canvasbacks.

There are certain species that can get too numerous to devote more than 10 rows to in the Noteworthy Records. However, I feel it is important to portray an increased number of reports. In this case, the number of reports can be summarized such as "11 rpts throughout WNY" which indicates that 11 distinct reports came in for this species during the month, scattered throughout Western New York (or B.O.S., or Canada, etc.). Species that are often summarized this way include Northern Shrike, Rough-legged Hawk, Fox Sparrow, and Carolina Wren among others.



**LOCATION:** A report may be noteworthy based strictly on the location of the sighting. There is a wide diversity of habitats across the B.O.S. study area and the sheer size of the area results in distributions of species that are common in one area and unusual in other parts. The compiler seeks to include the unordinary while not including the ordinary. Several examples include: 1) Northern Mockingbirds are common in Canadian portion of the B.O.S. study area and in Niagara County. However a report from any other county merits inclusion. 2) Certain waterfowl species like scoters are common on Lake Ontario during certain times of year. However, an inland report of a scoter is a noteworthy occurrence and will be included. 3) Some species like Blue-headed Vireo and Golden-crowned Kinglet are common breeders in the Southern Tier, however, a report in breeding season from northern Erie, Niagara, or Orleans county is noteworthy.

I encourage reporters to be very specific with locations. As an example, if you have a bird in Bond Lake Park in Lewiston. It is better to report it as from Bond Lake Park rather than Lewiston, or "Bond Lake Park, Lewiston" since the compiler does not know the location of every single park or birding location in the B.O.S. Study Area. Also, try to separate your sightings from Iroquois refuge from those at Tonawanda or Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Areas. Or, use Iroquois refuge and vicinity. Combining towns is also practical for some reports – such as Somerset to Carlton.

One of the moves I made during my time as compiler was to try and get less clutter among the locations. I removed the township abbreviation (Twp.) that was used for many years. This takes up less space on the page and township is also an out-of-date term as we now have Town of Lancaster rather than Lancaster Township.

I also maintained consistent abbreviations. However, I realize there is no key to the abbreviations. Although most are easily figured out, here is a quick summary of the most often used abbreviations: SP = state park; WMA = Wildlife Management Area; NWR = National Wildlife Refuge; NP = Nature Preserve; NS = Nature Sanctuary; WWTP = Wastewater Treatment Plant; PP = Provincial Park.

During the 1990s to present, the reporting and, correspondingly, the Noteworthy Records is increasingly biased toward the northern counties of the B.O.S. study area. Limited reporting occurs from elsewhere, especially in Chautauqua County. The B.O.S. records for Cattaraugus and Allegany Counties have in recent years been typically attributed to only a few birders located in the counties (Mike DeSha, Tom LeBlanc for

Catt. Co. and Betsy Brooks and Vivian Pitzrick for Allegany Co). Canadian reports are also inconsistent, mostly attributed to U.S.-based birders venturing to Ontario during certain times of year. Efforts to expand the range of reports received are highly encouraged as the B.O.S. noteworthy records are no longer representative of the entire study area.

**OBSERVERS:** A record is not considered noteworthy based merely on the observer reporting the bird. However, I admit that when I was compiler I would try to make sure that everyone who submitted their monthly records would show up somewhere in that month's records.

The bulk of the noteworthy records in any month are from a core of consistent reporters. Obviously there are many more birders in the area with records than the ten or so who regularly report. More reports and reporters are needed!

It is difficult for the compiler to tell who saw a bird first when many birders report on same day (e.g. warblers at Tiff). I would generally compile without seeing names. The compiler needs to try and determine who first found a rarity that many others chased and saw. For accepted verification reports, only the documenting reporter's name is listed (e.g. if Klick and Harris see a rare bird and Klick submits a verification report, only his name is listed). Obviously, every one who sees a rare bird should document it, even if observed together.

As compiler, another change I implemented was utilizing semicolons to distinguish between independent observations versus those that were reported together. For example, if Morgante and D'Anna independently report a species, the observers (along with date, number) would be "Morgante; D'Anna", if Morgante and D'Anna saw the bird together, it would be listed as "Morgante, D'Anna".

**THE PROTHONOTARY:** After the compiler is completed with his/her task, the Statisticians edit the Noteworthy Records compilation and determine the acceptance status of verification reports. The Statisticians send the revised list to the editor of *The Prothonotary*. The files have been sent electronically to the editor since the late 1990s, which has been a huge improvement over previous systems where the records had to be re-typed!

This concludes Part 1 of this article. The next installment will describe how the noteworthy records are distributed and used beyond *The Prothonotary*,



how you can help make the compiler's work a little easier, and an explanation on why you should be reporting your sightings.

**Birding Quiz**  
*By Mike Morgante*

Prior to the popularity of bird sound recordings (tapes and cds), many birders relied on learning bird songs by associating words and syllables with the song. Roger Tory Peterson included many of these phrasings in song descriptions in *A Field Guide to the Birds*. This is still a useful memorization tool in the field. Match the Peterson description (provided without any context) with the corresponding species. This will likely be tougher than you think!

1. frahmk, frahmk, frahmk

2. Zur,zur,zur,zree or beer,beer,beer,bee

3. Ha-oo-oo

4. Drink-your-teeee

5. Cut-cut-turrrrrrrr-ur

6. Kee-yer

7. Kuk-kuk-cow-cow-cow-cow-cowp-cowp

8. See-ti-wee-tu-wee or see-see-see-sisi-see

9. Twit twit twit sweet sweet sweet chew chew chew

10. Chick-a-per-weeoo-chick

11. Hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo-hooaw

12. Tlee-oo-ee
- A. Common Loon

B. Pied-billed Grebe

C. Great Blue Heron

D. Black-bellied Plover

E. Red-shouldered Hawk

F. Barred Owl

G. Brown Creeper

H. Marsh Wren

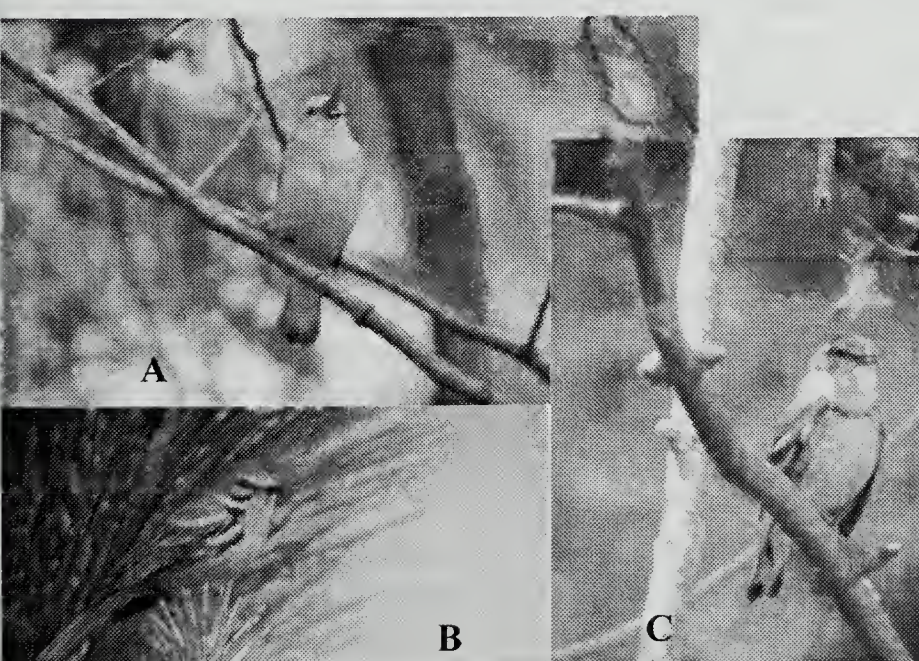
I. White-eyed Vireo

J. Black-thr. Blue Warbler

K. Northern Waterthrush

L. Eastern Towhee

1 – C, 2 – J, 3 – A, 4 – L, 5 – H, 6 – E, 7 – B, 8 – G, 9 – K, 10 – I, 11 – F, 12 – D.



Prothonotary(A), Prairie(B), and Cerulean(C) Warblers photographed by Don Harris in the BOS region.

**Bald Eagles: Up for the Count**  
*website cited in the Science vol 304, page 1575*

Forty years ago, pesticides and hunting had slashed the number of bald eagle breeding pairs in the lower 48 states to less than 500. Today, with the population soaring to 7500 pairs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is mulling whether to remove the species from the protected list. This federal website (<http://ocid.nacse.org/qml/nbii/eagles/>) holds newly posted data from annual midwinter bald eagle surveys from 1986 through 2000. Summary charts/tables show that although most states saw rising eagle numbers during this time, a few, such as Alabama and Colorado, recorded declines. One of the tables is shown below.

TABLE 1. Estimates of percent annual change in midwinter bald eagle counts with 95% confidence intervals by ecoregion, 1986-2000 (n = 563; n = number of census routes). Asterisks indicate count trends significantly different from zero.

Ecoregion	% Annual change	95% C.I.
East Coast <sup>a</sup>	+3.6%	1.3-5.9*
Eastern Woodland <sup>b</sup>	+2.5%	0.6-4.3*
Great Basin <sup>c</sup>	+1.3%	-0.4-3.0
Great Lakes <sup>d</sup>	+7.0%	3.5-10.6*
Gulf <sup>e</sup>	+1.4%	-0.8-3.6
Pacific Coast <sup>f</sup>	+1.6%	-0.4-3.5
Prairie <sup>g</sup>	+3.2%	1.5-4.8*
Rockies <sup>h</sup>	-0.3%	-1.8-1.3
Southwest Desert <sup>i</sup>	-1.2%	-3.9-1.5

<sup>a</sup>Southeastern Coastal Plain (27) and New England/Mid-Atlantic Coast (30)  
<sup>b</sup>Atlantic Northern Forest (14), Central Hardwoods (24), Appalachian Mountains (28), and Piedmont (29)  
<sup>c</sup>Great Basin (9) and Sierra Nevada (15)  
<sup>d</sup>Boreal Hardwood Transition (12), Lower Great Lakes (13), and Prairie Hardwood Transition (23)  
<sup>e</sup>Oaks and Prairies (21), West Gulf Coastal Plain (25), Mississippi Alluvial Valley (26), and Gulf Coastal Prairie (37)  
<sup>f</sup>Northern Pacific Rainforest (5) and Coastal California (32)  
<sup>g</sup>Prairie Potholes (11), Badlands and Prairie (17), Short-grass Prairie (18), Central Mixed-grass prairie(19), Edwards Plateau (20), and Eastern Tallgrass Prairie (22)  
<sup>h</sup>Northern Rockies (10) and Southern Rockies (16)  
<sup>i</sup>Sonoran and Mohave Deserts (33), Sierra Madre Occidental (34), and Chihuahuan Desert (35)



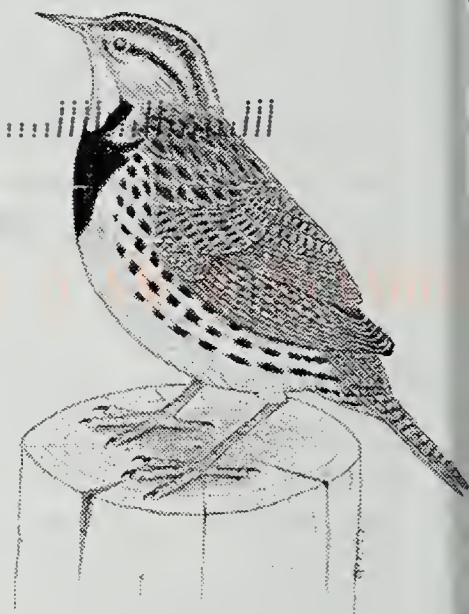
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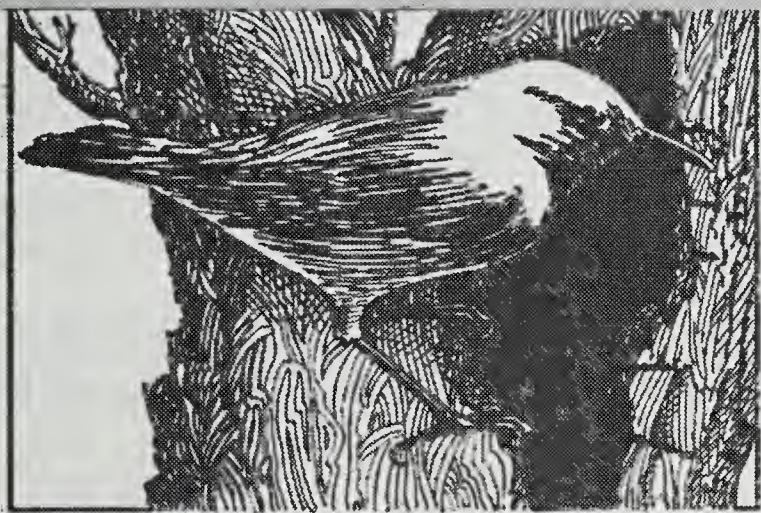
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## September – October Calendar

- August 29: Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie for shorebirds** (Buff-breasted Sandpiper?) and other early migrants. Leader: Mike Hamilton (716-881-6709). Meet at 7:30 AM at Vermont and Busti. We will car pool from there.
- September 8: BOS Meeting. Members' Night.** Bring along your favorite series/slides on a carousel to share. 7:30 PM at the Museum of Science.
- September 12: Sunday. Tifft Nature Preserve and Times Beach for waterfowl and shorebirds.** Leader: Ed Ratajczak (683-0307). Meet at 7:00 AM at the P. parking lot. This is a half-day trip.
- September 19: New York State Ornithological Association 57th Annual Meeting.** Please contact <http://www.nybirds.org/Articles/FedAnnualMtg.htm> and/or Gladys Birdsall by [gjb5@cornell.edu](mailto:gjb5@cornell.edu) or by phone at 607-257-0130 if you have questions regarding this year's Annual Meeting.
- September 22:** The second reading of the changes to the bylaws at the BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room of the Museum of Science.
- September 26: Sunday. Western Lake Ontario Plains Field Trip for fall migrants.** Leaders Tom and Susan O'Donnell (716-284-5569 or [TMODonnell@adelphia.net](mailto:TMODonnell@adelphia.net)). Meet at 8:00AM at Tops on Center Street in Lewiston.
- October 10: BOS Annual October Count.** All BOS members are expected to participate. If you would like to help out contact: Mike Hamilton 881-6709 or [mhsr@wzrd.com](mailto:mhsr@wzrd.com).
- October 13: BOS Annual Meeting and election of Officers.** This meeting is at 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room at the Buffalo Museum of Science.



# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 8 August, 2004

### THE MONTH: July

by Mike Zebehazy

July is normally the warmest and sunniest month of the year. This year it wasn't. July 2004 was very wet and cloudy. In fact, it was the cloudiest July ever recorded here with only 40% of possible sunshine (normal is 66%) including three days with no sun at all. The average temperature of 69° F was 1.8° cooler than normal and 20 of the 31 days were on the cool side with maximums suppressed due to cloud cover. Only eight days reached the 80s, about half the usual for July. Rainfall was frequent and heavy totaling 6.04 inches, nearly double the normal amount, making it the wettest July since 1992 and 8th wettest ever. (Weather information provided by National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office Buffalo; [http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/buf/climate\\_information.htm](http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/buf/climate_information.htm))

Although the month was somewhat of a weather disaster, one could hardly say that of the birds reported. Bill Watson's Cattle Egret verification confirmed this bird that had been reported at several locations in Dunnville, Ontario. The egret was, appropriately, with a group of cattle and two horses. Watson also observed a very rare in summer adult male White-winged Scoter in breeding plumage off the Lake Erie shore at Rock Point Provincial Park in Dunnville.

Merlins have once again returned to the usual location on the University at Buffalo south campus. They have roosted here for a number of years now and have

been regularly documented in this publication.

By the third week of the month migrating shorebird species began to be reported from sev-

eral of the usual locations in the study area, including eight species from the north shore of Lake Erie in Ontario.

Watson's Lesser Black-backed Gull was a second-summer bird, which he observed on a 20-yard long jetty at the end of Route 425 in the Town of Wilson. With it were Ring-billed and Herring Gulls and Caspian Terns providing the opportunity for immediate comparison for size, color, and plumage.

While doing Atlas work in the Town of Ellington in Chautauqua County, Mike Morgante discovered a family group of 5 Common Ravens at Twenty-eight Mile Creek Road.

In Allegany State Park Tim Baird continued to monitor the nesting Yellow-throated Warblers until July 18 when he observed an adult feeding a fledgling in the nesting area. His careful observations noted their foraging habits: "gleaning the branches and tufts of needles of the pines in the area. The search for food generally started well in from the end of a branch, and the birds worked their way along the branch toward the foliage at the end. Often the birds would fly out and hover about the needles at the end of branches. Most of the observed food captured was insect larvae collected to feed the young. One winged insect (possibly a mayfly) was taken." As Baird also notes, subspecies of Yellow-throated Warbler are generally distinguished by the presence or absence of yellow in the lores, difference in bill size and selection of nest sites. Photographs and explanation accompanying Baird's report show one of the adults with white lores and some white on the chin suggesting *Dendroica dominica albilora* while a second adult shows some yellow in the lores and an all yellow chin suggesting *D. d. dominica*. He also points out that *Bull's Birds of*

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**The Prothonotary** is published monthly by the Buffalo Ornithological Society, Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo, NY 14211. Send subscriptions and address changes to the Corresponding Secretary, Karen Landau, S-9195 State Road, Colden, NY 14033. The regular subscription rate is \$20/year. Back issues are available from the Treasurer for \$2/issue.

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*New York* (1998, Cornell University Press) describes the difficulty in determining the subspecies of Yellow-throated Warbler through field observations.

Yellow-throated Warbler in Allegany, sure, but in Erie County in summer? Why not? A most remarkable find was of a singing male July 11 in Chestnut Ridge Park in Orchard Park. At best a very rare spring migrant, this species has never been recorded in Erie County during the summer season. This individual was present at least through the end of the month. Mike Morgante first identified the bird by its distinctive song. Many other observers also remarked how they heard the bird long before seeing it.

Another wonderful

find at Chestnut Ridge Park in the same location, this time by Watson and Pawlicki, was that of four Pine Warblers. Three were singing males and one was a fledgling still being fed by an adult male.

Back in Ellington Mike Morgante heard the distinct song of the Prairie Warbler moving up the chromatic scale. He notes that this is only the second report during Atlas 2000 of this species in Chautauqua County. It appears that Cattaraugus County birds are beginning to discover the lure of Chautauqua as well.

Uncommon sparrow species were prominent this month also. They include Vesper, Grasshopper and Henslow's as presented in Noteworthy Records while Clay-colored Sparrows were reported via Dial-a-Bird and several were banded by Betsy Brooks in Andover.

Other interesting tidbits from Dial-a-bird with incomplete or no verifications submitted included Upland Sandpipers at Tillman Wildlife Management

Area in Clarence in a landfill area to the south; Grasshopper Sparrows in Lockport on the east side of Day Road less than a mile south of Wheeler Road, and also at Tillman; Clay-colored Sparrows in the Town of Yorkshire; a nesting Tennessee Warbler on Graylee Hill Road in South Valley, Cattaraugus County (The 1988 New York State Breeding Bird Atlas reports this species breeding only in the Adirondacks). I include these here because the species and locations may be of interest to others for future reference.

Thanks to Gerry Rising, David Suggs, Jack Skalicky, and all those who submitted reports that aided in writing this article.

## Tifft Nature Preserve Trip Report

by Ed Ratajczak

Fourteen audio and visually adept ornithophiles, whose presence facilitated "leading" the group, attended the September 12th birding endeavor at Tifft Nature Preserve. Despite the "high-speed" migratory avenue previously created by the northerly winds due to the combined efforts of hurricane Frances and a high pressure area to the west of us, a few passerines stopped off at Tifft. This gave us cause to ponder why "birdwatching" was changed to "birding." Nevertheless, 45 species were observed. The paucity of warblers and the very unfortunate sciatic attack to the leader provided us with an excuse to terminate the venture. However, the highlight of the trip was provided by a young aspiring birder. Awed by the elegance and beauty of a flock of Cedar Waxwings, he reverently asked, "You call this slow?!" Perhaps we're a bit jaded by too many amazing fallouts where, "they hung from the trees like Christmas ornaments."

Note added by Bill Watson: In addition to Cedar Waxwings the field trip participants observed four heron species (Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, and Black-crowned Night-Heron) three vireo species (Warbling, Philadelphia, and Red-eyed) and six warbler species (Magnolia, Nashville, Yellow-rumped, Wilson's Warblers, and Northern Parula and American Redstart).



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
D.-crested Cormorant	11; 28	215; 514	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	12	120	Motor I.	Watson
"	14; 22	1200; 800	Rock Point PP	Watson
Great Egret	4	1	Grand I.	Hess
"	7 - 31	1 - 2	Tonawanda	Hess
"	12	10; 1	Motor I.; Tonawanda	Watson
"	14; 22	1; 1	Fort Erie	Watson
"	17	1	E. Concord	J Landau
"	29	28	Motor I.	Watson
<u>Cattle Egret</u>	22; 25	1; 1	Dunnville	Watson
Mute Swan	14; 22	9; 17	Fort Erie	Watson; Watson, Pawlicki
"	24	2 ad, 7 yg	Wilson	Watson, Pawlicki
American Wigeon	17	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
American Black Duck	17	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Black Duck X Mallard	7	1 ad, 10 yg	Newfane	Watson
Lesser Scaup	17	4	Batavia WWTP	Watson
White-winged Scoter	<u>14; 22</u>	1; 1	Rock Point PP	Watson
Hooded Merganser	17	11	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	24	2	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Common Merganser	11	1	Niagara Falls, NY	Watson
Ruddy Duck	17	318	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Osprey	1 - 3	1 ad, 1 yg	Allegany Res.	Hess
"	1 - 3	2 n; both 1 ad, 2yg	Allegany SP	Hess
"	17	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Bald Eagle	24	1 imm	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Broad-winged Hawk	5; 21	1; 1	Alfred	Brooks
"	10	3	Stockton	Watson, Pawlicki
"	13	2	Colden	J&K Landau
"	18	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg
"	29	2	Bear Creek SF	Chilton
Merlin	<u>29; 31</u>	1; 2	UB south campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	11	1	Buffalo	Morgante
Semipalmated Plover	22F	4	Fort Erie	Pawlicki, Watson
"	24; 28	2; 6	Newfane	Watson
Greater Yellowlegs	20F	4	Newfane	Watson
Lesser Yellowlegs	14F; 17	7; 23	Rock Point PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	20; 24	31; 60	Newfane	Watson; Watson, Pawlicki
Solitary Sandpiper	20F; 24	1; 2	Newfane	Watson
"	20F	1	Morgan's Pt.	Pawlicki, Harris
"	22	1	Morgan's Pt.	Watson, Pawlicki



<u>Species</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	27	1	Newfane	Lazarczyk, Pawlicki
Ruddy Turnstone	22F	1	Newfane	Watson, Pawlicki
Sanderling	20F	1	Rock Point PP	Pawlicki, Harris
"	22	4	Rock Point PP	Watson, Pawlicki
Semipalm. Sandpiper	14F; 17	1; 1	Rock Point PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	22; 28	20; 26	Rock Point PP; Newfane	Watson
Least Sandpiper	14F; 17; 22	5; 3; 6	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	22; 24	15; 1	Fort Erie; Newfane	Watson
Pectoral Sandpiper	22F; 24	1; 16	Morgan's Pt; Newfane	Pawlicki, Watson; Watson, Pawlicki
* Stilt Sandpiper	22F	2	Rock Point PP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	31	3	Newfane	D'Anna
Short-b. Dowitcher	20F	7	N. shore, L. Erie	Pawlicki, Harris
"	22	1	Fort Erie	Watson
"	24; 28	1; 2	Newfane	Watson, Pawlicki; Watson
"	27	2	Newfane	Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
Wilson's Phalarope	27; 28	1; 1	Newfane	Pawlicki, Lazarczyk; D'Anna
Little Gull	20	1	Rock Point PP	Pawlicki, Harris
"	22	2	Rock Point PP	Pawlicki, Watson
Lesser Black-b. Gull	24	1	Wilson	Watson, et al
Caspian Tern	14	1; 1	Rock Point PP; Long Beach CA	Watson
"	24	11	Wilson	Watson
Red-headed Wdpkr.	22	1 ad, 1 yg	Fort Erie	Watson
"	24	1	Newfane	Watson, Pawlicki
Acadian Flycatcher	1	1	Allegany SP	Hess
"	10	1	Stockton	Pawlicki, Watson
"	18	4	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Willow Flycatcher	19	1 ad, 1 yg	Lewiston	Roberson
Red-eyed Vireo	7F	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Common Raven	2	5	Ellington	Morgante
"	29	3; 1	Bear Creek SF; Bush Hill SF	Chilton
"	31	1	Ashford	J&K Landau
Bank Swallow	17	500	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Cliff Swallow	17; 28	3; 4	Batavia WWTP; Tonawanda I.	Watson
"	30	14	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
Red-br. Nuthatch	10	1	Cheektowaga	Morgante
"	16	1	Niagara Falls (f)	Roberson
"	20 - 31	2	Niagara Falls (f)	Roberson
Carolina Wren	17-31	1 - 2	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter et al
"	22; 24	1; 1	Wainfleet; Lockport	Watson, Pawlicki; Pawlicki, Watson
Winter Wren	2	1	Great Falls	Lazarczyk, Pawlicki
"	17	1	Wilson	D'Anna et al
"	18	2	Ward	Brooks
"	18	1	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Golden-cr. Kinglet	11;18;20	2; 4; 2	Ward; Ward; Alfred	Brooks
Swainson's Thrush	1	1	Allegany SP	Hess
"	18	3 ad, 1 yg	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Mockingbird	10	1; 1	Cambria; Porter	Roberson



<u>Species</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	11; 12	1; 1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	12; 17	1; 1	Cambria; Lewiston	Roberson
"	30	2	Wheatfield	Roberson
Brewster's Warbler	2	1	Ellington	Morgante
Nashville Warbler	2	1	Allegany SP	Hess
"	3; 20	1; 2	Andover; Alfred	Brooks
"	4	1	Ashford	Yoerg, Henderson
<u>Yellow-thr. Warbler</u>	1 - 18	1	Allegany SP	Baird
"	11; 13	1; 1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
"	12	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Watson, Pawlicki
"	13; 18, 25	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	K. Landau, et al; Andrle
"	13 - 20	5 recs.	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Many observers
Pine Warbler	<u>11</u>	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
"	<u>12</u>	4	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Watson, Pawlicki
Prairie Warbler	2; 7; 19	1; 2; 1	Andover	Brooks
"	2	1	<u>Ellington</u>	Morgante
"	2	1	Yorkshire	Lazarczyk, Pawlicki
"	4	5	Yorkshire	Yoerg, Henderson
La. Waterthrush	1; 2	2; 2	Allegany SP	Hess
"	10	1	Ischua	DeSha
"	18	2	Allegany SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Canada Warbler	1	1	Lyndon	DeSha
Vesper Sparrow	2; 20	1; 1	Andover	Brooks
"	4	1	Ashford	Yoerg, Henderson
"	22	1	Humphrey	DeSha
Grasshopper Sparrow	2 - 20	7repts; 4max	Andover	Brooks
"	8; 18	3; 1	Hartland	Watson
"	17	1	Ischua	DeSha
"	28	1 ad, 1 yg	Hartland	Watson, Pawlicki
Henslow's Sparrow	20	1	Andover	Brooks
White-thr. Sparrow	1	1	Lyndon	DeSha
"	11;18;20	2; 1; 4	Ward; Ward; Alfred	Brooks
Purple Finch	8; 10	1; 1	Royalton; Stockton	Watson; Watson, Pawlicki
"	20 - 31	1 - 2	Wilson (f)	D'Anna, Potter

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year:** 268

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month including May Count:** 002

**Total for the year 2004:** 270

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.



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## October – December Calendar

- September 26: Sunday. Western Lake Ontario Plains Field Trip for fall migrants.** Leaders Tom and Susan O'Donnell (716-284-5569 or TMODonnell@adelphia.net). Meet at 8:00AM at Tops on Center Street in Lewiston.
- October 10: BOS Annual October Count.** All BOS members are encouraged to participate. Contact: Mike Hamilton 881-6709 or mhsr@wzrd.com.
- October 13: BOS Annual Meeting and election of Officers.** This meeting is at 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room at the Buffalo Museum of Science.
- October 23: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip for fall migrants.** Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com). Meet at 8 a.m. at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104.
- October 27: BOS Meeting** at 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room of the Buffalo Science Museum.
- November 13: Saturday. B.O.S. 75th Anniversary Dinner** will be held at the Youngstown Yacht Club.
- November 14: Niagara River joint trip with Rochester GOS,** for gulls and waterfowl. Meet at 9:00 AM at Fort Niagara State Park in the parking lot just outside the old fort. Leaders: BOS Mike Hamilton (881-6709 or mhsr@wzrd.com) and GOS Bob Spahn.
- December 4: Saturday. Niagara River for Gulls.** Meet at 8:00 AM at the upstream parking lot on Goat Island (no fee at this time of year). If the bridge to Goat Island is closed, we will meet at the bridge entrance. Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com).
- December 8: Buffalo Ornithological Society Annual Holiday Celebration** at 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room of the Buffalo Science Museum. Please bring a treat to share and enjoy an evening of birding friendship.



# The PROTHONOTARY

OCT 26 2004

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Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 9 September, 2004

### THE MONTH: August

*by Jerry Lazarczyk*

The summer of 2004 will go down as one of the coolest and cloudiest ever recorded in WNY and throughout the Northeast. In Buffalo it was the third coolest summer in the 62-year airport record. It was the cloudiest summer in 89 years. However rainfall was near normal.

The month averaged out cool and cloudy but was an improvement over July. Rainfall was actually fairly sparse in the immediate Buffalo area but it often threatened. Rainfall totaled just 1.86 inches, less than half the usual for August. The average temperature of 67.2 degrees was cooler than the normal temperature of 69.1 degrees. Sunshine totaled just 49%, far less than the usual 64% for August. It was the cloudiest August in 23 years. Lake Erie was between 70 and 72 degrees during the month, which is just a degree or two below normal. (From McLaughlin's National Weather Service Climate Summary for August 2004.)

Terrible news was received from the north from Ron Pittaway via OntBirds. As paraphrased from Ron Pittaway's email: Very few southbound juvenile shorebirds from the Arctic and sub Arctic areas were migrating through Southern Ontario indicating a failed

nesting for many northern species. An example used was a report for Townsend Sewage Lagoons near Lake Erie. On August 8<sup>th</sup>, Kevin McLaughlin saw 440-500 adult Semipalmated Sandpipers and ONLY ONE JUVENILE. He saw ONLY 5-6 juvenile Lesser Yellowlegs

among 200-300 adults and had few juvenile Lesser Sandpipers. Juveniles of all the species mentioned above should have been common at the time. Testimonials from Wildlife Biologists, Naturalists et al that visited the Arctic and sub Arctic areas in early summer indicated that a widespread nesting failure occurred. They pretty much agreed that the spring and summer have been exceptionally cold, snowy, wet, and windy in much of northern Canada from James Bay to the High Arctic Islands.

Follow up discussions with local birders, however, did not provide evidence to corroborate the bad news. In fact, Dr. Robert Andrie and other regional bird watchers noted unprecedented numbers of juvenile Baird's Sandpipers, a western arctic breeder.

The following is paraphrased from Ron Pittaway's email responding to a follow up enquiry: Ron indicated that the nesting weather was worst on the eastern side of the north continent. His impression suggested that the migratory peak adult numbers of many species were behind schedule by perhaps a week or more and that these species delayed nesting waiting for better weather. Similarly, the first arrivals and peaks of juveniles averaged one to two weeks later than usual for most species. Species whose juvenile numbers were much lower than normal included Semipalmated Plover, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. These numbers were lower proportionately than other shorebirds whose numbers were also low. He also believed juvenile Short-billed Dowitcher numbers were somewhat lower than normal. Most above-mentioned species numbers were probably down because their core breeding populations are in the Hudson Bay Lowlands, which Ron believed were severely affected by poor weather. Ron said there were

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2005-2006 Bob DeLeon  
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Jim Landau

days in August when the mudflats and shorelines should have been dominated by juvenile Semipalmated Sandpipers but the birds were not present in usual number, but cautioned that these were his impressions.

Ron said that until this year very few birders reported shorebird age classes, more attention to this detail will allow comparison in the future - perhaps the August Shorebird Survey protocol should include this information when possible.

Ron also mentioned that the numbers of migrant juvenile Bonaparte's Gulls in August at Lake Simcoe (40 miles north of Toronto) were below average. He suggested that juveniles usually comprise 25% or more of indi-

viduals in big flocks but this August they were often only 5% or less of big flocks. Ron reported that Canada goose and Snow Goose reproduction was reduced in northern Ontario. The previous low production year was 1992, and this summer's nesting success was likely poorer. Geese had better nesting success farther north. He said this information is from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Closer to home, a Cattle Egret was a common sight in nearby Dunnville, Ontario. The appearance of a Cattle Egret was regularly reported throughout the month on or near the same farm at the junction of Nice Road and Regional Road 3. Cattle Egret is an exceptional August visitor to the BOS area, appearing only in Ft. Erie, Ontario on the 4th, 11th, and 15th of August 1976 and in Clarence, NY on August 15th, also 1976.

There was an August 1st sighting of a Franklin's Gull, as well as many shorebird species, south of Chestnut Rd. in the Town of Newfane, New York. To the delight of birders, the Franklin's Gull, like the Cattle Egret, stayed almost 3 weeks. This locality may become a new hot spot, as shorebirds were not noted here in any quantity or variety before this summer.

A White-winged Scoter was noted at the Bird Island pier by Mike Morgante on August 3rd, and on Lake Ontario, Wilson, New York on August 31st 25 White-winged Scoters by Bill Watson and Jim Pawlicki. Historically, this summer visitor is an exceptional record for early August. There are only 4 previous records for the first half of August. An even more unusual August record was the sighting of a Black Scoter by Willie D'Anna on August 28th on Lake Ontario near his home in Wilson, New York. This is the first ever August record for Black Scoter in the BOS study area.

Rare Western Sandpipers were seen on August 17th, 20th and 29th just east of Rock Point Provincial Park in Dunnville, Ontario. That was a juvenile on the 17th and 20th, and a juvenile and adult on the 29th.

The earliest ever fall migrant American Golden Plover was seen by Willie D'Anna's OFO Field trip on August 7th on a sod farm on Canal Bank Road in Dunnville Ontario. The previous early record was Dayton NY on August 12, 2001.

Some unusual records from last month persisted into August. Four Merlins reported at The University of Buffalo Main Street campus on August 6th represents a new August record high, last year this number of Merlins were not present until September 11th.

Also, the Merlins reported on August 20th at Rockhouse in Rock Point Provincial Park and near Niece Road and Dickout Road in Dunnville, Ontario were record-early fall migrants.

Pine Warblers were reported August 1st at Chestnut Ridge Park in Orchard Park and on August 20th at the Greenwood Cemetery in Wilson. These represent new breeding areas for this species in Western New York.

*(The MONTH: continued on page 93)*



**Cattle Egret photographed by Willie D'Anna in the Town of Dunnville, Ont. on August 7, 2004**



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	22	2	Wilson	D'Anna
* <u>Eared Grebe</u>	28	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson
D.-crested Cormorant	4 - 26	8 repts - 971 max	Ontario, WNY	Watson et al
Great Egret	2 - 11	1 - 2	Tonawanda	Hess
"	4 - 28	5 repts - 17 max	Various, WNY	Watson et al
"	7	1	Newfane	D'Anna, Potter
"	15	2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	19	3	Times Beach NP	Turisk
<u>Cattle Egret</u>	2	1	Dunnville, Ont.	Lazarczyk, Pawlicki
"	7; 22	1; 1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	7	1	Dunnville, Ont.	D'Anna et al (OFO)
Black-cr. Night-Heron	7; 9	2; 1	Pt. Colborne; Niag. Falls	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	15; 22	5; 3	Ft. Erie; Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
"	19	1	Times Beach	Turisk
"	29	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna, Ewald et al
Mute Swan	3; 20	3; 15	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
American Wigeon	4; 28	1; 1	Oak Orchard WMA; Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
American Black Duck	14	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	18	2	Newfane	D'Anna
"	28	6	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
Blue-winged Teal	4; 26; 28	3; 1	Batavia WWTP; Tifft NP	Watson
"	22	2	Wilson	D'Anna
"	28	110	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
Northern Shoveler	4; 28	6; 41	Batavia WWTP	Watson et al
Northern Pintail	28	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Green-winged Teal	4; 26; 29	1; 4; 45	Batavia WWTP, Tifft NP	Watson
"	18	16	Newfane	D'Anna
Ring-necked Duck	4; 28	2; 5	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
Lesser Scaup	4; 28	4; 6	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
White-winged Scoter	<u>3</u>	1	Bird I. Pier	Morgante
Black Scoter	<u>28</u>	1	Wilson	D'Anna
Hooded Merganser	4	10	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Ruddy Duck	4; 28	267; 290	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
Osprey	4	4	Iroquois NWR vicinity	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
"	7	1	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna (OFO)
"	12; 14	1; 1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	18	1	Ripley	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	22	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg
Bald Eagle	4	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	7	1	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna (OFO)
"	12	1	Iroquois NWR	Beattie
"	15	1; 1	Hanover; Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
"	21	1 imm	Wilson	D'Anna
Northern Goshawk	20	1	Allen	Brooks
Broad-winged Hawk	1	1	Chestnut Ridge Park	Turisk, Morgante
"	21	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
Merlin	<u>6; 12; 31</u>	4; 3; 2	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	<u>20</u>	1; 1	Rock Pt. PP; Dunnville	Yoerg
"	<u>29</u>	1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Yoerg
* Black-bellied Plover	14F	2	Newfane	Pawlicki, Harris et al
"	15; 28	2; 5	Newfane; Wilson	D'Anna
"	20; 22	2; 89	Newfane; Wainfleet	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
"	20; 29	54; 40	Dunnville	Yoerg; Yoerg, Henderson
* Amer. Golden-Plover	<u>7F</u>	1	Dunnville	Watson, D'Anna et al
"	29	10	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
Semipalmated Plover	7	4	Rock Pt. PP	Watson, D'Anna (OFO)
"	15	8	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
Greater Yellowlegs	20; 28	1; 1	Newfane; Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
Lesser Yellowlegs	1,20; 28	90,35; 30	Newfane, Batavia WWTP	Watson et al
"	15	1	Hanover	Morgante
Solitary Sandpiper	2	1	Almond	Brooks
"	2	1	Bethany, Ont.	Lazarczyk, Pawlicki
"	4; 31	1; 5	Tonawanda WMA; Newfane	Watson et al
"	22	2	Newfane	Yoerg
Upland Sandpiper	15	2	Dunkirk Airport	Morgante
"	17	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Whimbrel	7F; 22	5; 1	Wainfleet, Ont.	Watson, Lazarczyk, D'Anna
"	17; 29	1; 1	Rock Pt. PP; Dunnville	Yoerg; Yoerg, Henderson
Ruddy Turnstone	7; 22; 28	2; 4; 1	Rock Pt. PP, Batavia WWTP	Watson et al
"	15	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
"	20; 29	6; 5	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
* Red Knot	2F	2	Bethany, Ont.	Lazarczyk, Pawlicki et al
"	29	1; 2	Long Beach CA; Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
Sanderling	15	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
Semipalm. Sandpiper	1 - 31	4 repts - 30 max	Rock Pt. PP, WNY	Watson et al
"	15	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
"	29	1	Darien Lakes SP	Holmes
* <u>Western Sandpiper</u>	17F; 20	1; 1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
"	29	2	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
Least Sandpiper	1 - 31	3 repts - 20 max	Newfane, Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	15	1	Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
White-r. Sandpiper	15F; 20	1; 2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
"	29	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
* Baird's Sandpiper	22F; 28	4; 9	Rock Pt. PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
"	22F; 23	1; 2	Newfane	Yoerg; Pawlicki
"	28	2	Dunkirk Harbor	Moshers
"	29	4 repts – 8 max	N. shore, L. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
Pectoral Sandpiper	20; 29	2; 5	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
"	20; 31	16; 4	Newfane	Watson
"	22; 29	3; 5	Newfane; Dunnville	Yoerg
Dunlin	7F; 22	1; 1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson, D'Anna (OFO)
"	20	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
Stilt Sandpiper	1; 20	1; 1	Newfane	Watson, Pawlicki et al
"	2	23	Newfane	Pawlicki
"	22	2	Newfane	Yoerg
"	29	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
* Buff-br. Sandpiper	29F	1	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
Short-b. Dowitcher	1	9	Newfane	Watson
Wilson's Snipe	20	28	Newfane	Watson, Pawlicki
"	23	38	Newfane	Pawlicki
"	28	32	Newfane	D'Anna
* Franklin's Gull	<u>2</u>	1	Newfane	Lazarczyk, D'Anna et al
"	<u>4</u>	1	Newfane	Lazarczyk
"	7 - 18	4 repts	Newfane	D'Anna et al
Little Gull	1	1	Rock Pt. PP	D'Anna, Potter
"	28	1	Wilson	D'Anna
Caspian Tern	3; 15	2; 12	Bird I. Pier; Dunkirk Harbor	Morgante
"	4; 22; 31	2; 6; 5	WNY, Ontario	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
"	12	3	Iroquois NWR	Beattie
"	14	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
* Forster's Tern	22F	1	Rock Pt. PP	Morgante
Common Nighthawk	14F; 24	2; 28	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	15	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	16	2	Elma	Holmes
"	23 - 31	1 - 2	Tonawanda	Hess
"	22; 25	2; 3	Buffalo; West Seneca	Morgante
Whip-poor-will	17	4	Wainfleet	Yoerg
Red-headed Wdpkr.	12	1	Four Mile Creek SP	Chilton
"	15	1	Pt. Gratiot	J & K Landau
"	15	3	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
Yellow-b. Flycatcher	20F	1	Newfane	Pawlicki
"	24; 25	1; 1	Wilson	D'Anna
* <u>Western Kingbird</u>	28	1	Eden	Andrle
Yellow-thr. Vireo	28	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Philadelphia Vireo	27F	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Common Raven	16	1	Farmersville SF	Chilton
"	22	1	<u>Wilson</u>	D'Anna
"	30	2	Ward	Brooks
Purple Martin	24	32	Amherst	Pawlicki



<u>Species</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Cliff Swallow	3	6	Buffalo	Morgante
"	9; 28	11; 4	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	15	2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg
Brown Creeper	1	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante, Turisk
"	7; 10; 18	1; 2; 1	Ward	Brooks
Carolina Wren	1	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	14	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	27	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
Winter Wren	19	1	Ward	Brooks
Swainson's Thrush	22	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Hermit Thrush	1	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante
Blue-winged Warbler	1	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	14	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	15	2	Evangola SP	Morgante
Tennessee Warbler	27F	1	Tonawanda	Hess
Nashville Warbler	1	1	Franklinville	Pawlicki
"	20F	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
Chestnut-s. Warbler	20	1	Ft. Niagara	Watson; Pawlicki
"	22	1	Wilson	Potter, D'Anna
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	24F	2	Wilson	Potter
Blackburnian Warbler	14F	2	Amherst	Pawlicki
<u>Yellow-thr. Warbler</u>	1	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante, Turisk
Pine Warbler	<u>1</u>	2	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante, Turisk
"	<u>20</u>	1	Wilson	Watson
Black-&-white Warb.	9F	1	Buckhorn I. SP; Wilson	Watson, Pawlicki
"	14;15;16	1; 1; 2	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	20	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
Northern Waterthrush	6F	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	29	1	Wilson-Tuscarora SP	D'Anna, Potter
"	29	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
Mourning Warbler	15	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
Hooded Warbler	1	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk.	Morgante
"	4; 31F	1; 1	Iroq. NWR; Golden Hill SP	Pawlicki, Watson
"	6	1	Alfred	Brooks
Wilson's Warbler	24F	1	Wilson	D'Anna
"	31	1	Golden Hill SP	Watson, Pawlicki
Canada Warbler	14F	1	Amherst	Pawlicki
"	14F	1	E. Aurora	Holmes
"	20	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
"	24	1	Wilson	Potter

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year:** 268

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month including May Count:** 002

**Total for the year 2004:** 270

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.



*(The MONTH: continued from page 88)*

A Yellow-throated Warbler seen by Michael Turisk and Michael Morgante in Chestnut Ridge Park in Orchard Park, New York on August 1<sup>st</sup> is the first Erie county record for August.

A Western Kingbird was spotted in Eden, New York by Bob and Pat Andrie on August 28th and later that day by Mike Zebechazy and Doug Happ and the following day by Jim Pawlicki. According to the BOS Seasonal Checklist of the Birds, this is an exceptional record with previous sightings from August 24, 1985 in Beamsville, Ontario and August 28, 1972 in Wainfleet, Ontario.

Willie D'Anna reported a Common Raven on his property in the Town of Wilson on August 22<sup>nd</sup> in Niagara County, an unusual location for the Common Raven in August.

An Eared Grebe was seen on August 28<sup>th</sup> at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant in Batavia, New York. Only six previous records exist, all at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant in Batavia, New York.

On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, a shorebird count was conducted. Unfortunately, the weather was terrible for shore birding. The number of birds reported was less than half of last year and some species were entirely absent such as Short-billed Dowitcher.

Mike Hamilton led a Canada shorebird field trip on August 29<sup>th</sup>, mostly on the north shore of Lake Ontario. The Cattle Egret was the highlight of the trip. Peter Yeorg reported a Whimbrel and Buff-breasted Sandpiper that day.

A big thanks goes to Bill Watson, Ron Pittaway, David Suggs (Custodian of the Buffalo Ornithological Society Noteworthy Records Data Base), Bob Andrie, Willie D'Anna, and Bob Spahn for help in preparing this article.

## Winter Finches

*by Ron Pittaway*

This article was originally posted to ListServer Ont-BIRD. It describes, in some detail, this seasons tree seed production and its influence on the winter movements of dependent bird species.

GENERAL FORECAST: Tree seed crops in northern Ontario this year vary from poor to excellent, depending on species and location, making predictions more difficult than in past years. Seed crops are better

east of Lake Superior to the Quebec border than west of Superior to the Manitoba border. Many finches are moving now or will move later, but some should remain in the north this winter where tree seed crops are good to excellent. In central Ontario, such as Algonquin Park, crops are average so some finches will winter in Algonquin, but numbers are not expected to be high. Expect more finches at feeders this winter than last winter in southern Ontario. Also, as seed supplies diminish over the winter in the north, more finches may drift south in February, increasing numbers at feeders. The two best seeds for finches at feeders are nyger (previously niger) and black oil sunflower seeds. See individual forecasts below for eight finch species, plus forecasts for three irruptive passerines associated with finch movements.

TREE SEED CROPS: (1) Conifers: White Spruce has an excellent cone crop north of Lake Huron in the Lake Nipissing region, but poor to fair around Timmins. White Spruce has a poor to fair crop north of Lake Superior. Black Spruce has a good to bumper crop south of Timmins, but a poor to fair crop north of Timmins. Both spruces have poor to good crops in northwestern Ontario. Balsam Fir had an excellent cone crop north of Lake Huron and a good crop in Algonquin Park. White Pine has good to excellent crops from Lake Superior east to Algonquin Park. White Pine has a poor crop in Muskoka and Parry Sound District. Red Pine has fair to good crops in many areas. Eastern Hemlock has an average crop on the Canadian Shield between Lake Ontario and the Ottawa River. White Cedar has average crops in many areas. Tamarack or Eastern Larch has a poor to fair crop. (2) Hardwoods/Deciduous: White Birch has a fair to good supply of seed catkins in central and northeastern Ontario. I received no information on birch crops from west of Lake Superior. Red Oak produced a fair to good crop of acorns in central Ontario, compared to last year's complete failure. American Beech had a good crop of beechnuts in central Ontario including a report from the Haliburton Highlands of "Black Bear dung being full of beechnut husks." American and Showy Mountain-ashes have good to bumper berry crops across much of the north including a report from Lake Nipigon of bear dung evidence. European Mountain-ash (rowan) in the settled areas of southern Ontario also has a large berry crop.

PINE GROSBEAK: Mountain-ash berries are abundant across much of northern Ontario. The big berry crop should keep most Pine Grosbeaks in the north this winter. A few Pines are expected along



Highway 60 in Algonquin Park, but few if any should get into the settled parts of southern Ontario.

**PURPLE FINCH:** Good numbers winter in central and northern Ontario only in years of bumper seed crops on several tree species. Most Purple Finches will migrate out of Ontario this fall because seed crops are not bumper in northern Ontario. However, a few should winter in southern Ontario. Watch for them at bird feeders.

**RED CROSSBILL:** There are at least eight types of Red Crossbills in North America that may be separate species. They differ in calls, size, bill size and cone preferences. Ontario has at least three types of Red Crossbill. Two are adapted to pines and one to hemlock. The uncommon resident "white pine crossbill" prefers White Pine cones, which has a big crop in northeastern Algonquin Park and excellent crops north and west of the Ottawa River and Lake Nipissing. The visiting "red pine crossbill" prefers Red Pine cones, which has a good crop this year. Eastern Hemlock has average cone crops in most areas so the small-billed "hemlock crossbill" (*sitkensis*) will be uncommon or absent this winter. Look and listen for them in large stands of hemlock such as along Highway 60 in Algonquin Park and the adjacent Haliburton Highlands. Red Crossbills in Ontario rarely feed on spruce.

**WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL:** Like a pendulum, White-winged Crossbills move back and forth across the coniferous forests from Alaska to Newfoundland. This crossbill is keyed to spruce. It also feeds on Balsam Fir, Tamarack and sometimes Eastern Hemlock, but rarely on pines unless stressed for food. There are good to excellent cone crops on spruce and fir in parts of northeastern Ontario and elsewhere, but White-winged Crossbills are currently scarce in northern Ontario and Algonquin Park. Where are they? Perhaps they went to Newfoundland where White-winged Crossbills recently fledged thousands of young because of the bumper cone crops on spruce and fir. They may stay in Newfoundland to nest again (Bruce Mactavish, pers. comm.). When they leave Newfoundland, perhaps this winter, watch for them as they seek big crops of spruce.

**COMMON and HOARY REDPOLLS:** Southward movements of Common Redpolls are linked to the abundance of birch seeds in the boreal forest. Since birch crops are fair to good in northeastern and central Ontario, I expect many redpolls will remain in the north, but small numbers should reach southern Ontario because the birch crop is not big enough to hold all redpolls in the north. Watch for Hoary Redpolls among the Commons. Many first year and

female Hoary Redpolls are tricky to identify, but a frosty adult male Hoary is unmistakable. In southern Ontario, redpolls frequent ornamental birches, weedy fields and feeders with nyger seed. It is often reported that redpolls show a "biennial periodicity" (every second year) in their irruptions south of the breeding range. However, Erskine and McManus (2003) suggested that the "irregular abundance but near-annual occurrence" of redpolls in the Atlantic Provinces is a better explanation than periodicity (two year cycle) in their irruptions.

**PINE SISKIN:** Like the White-winged Crossbill, siskins wander the continent searching for seed crops. Many siskins are now migrating south out of Ontario, but a few should stay in the north and Algonquin Park because of locally good seed crops. Small numbers of siskins should also visit feeders in southern Ontario, where they prefer nyger seed. Siskins are aggressive at feeders, fighting with one another, goldfinches and redpolls.

**EVENING GROSBEAK:** Despite an increase in bird feeders this species has decreased over the past 25 years. The reasons for the decline are not clear, but appear related to changes in the breeding habitat such as fewer big forest fires (fewer wild cherries) and fewer outbreaks of spruce budworm. Small numbers of Evening Grosbeaks should be widespread across northern Ontario. Expect some in Algonquin Park and at feeders in southern Ontario. They prefer black oil sunflower seeds.

**THREE IRRUPTIVE PASSERINES** often associated with finch movements.

**BLUE JAYS:** A good flight (smaller than last year) of Blue Jays migrated out of Ontario beginning about mid-September, but many have remained in central Ontario reflecting the moderate crop of acorns and good crops of beechnuts and hazel nuts this year. A few Blue Jays always winter far from humans in remote areas such as Algonquin Park. These isolated Blue Jays are often associated with a mated pair of Gray Jays on a permanent territory and partially depend on their food caches. A dependent Blue Jay with a pair of Gray Jays in winter was called a "satellite Blue Jay" by the late Russ Rutter, who did early studies of Gray Jays in Algonquin Park.

**RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH:** There has been a good (not big) migration through southern Ontario this fall. This suggests that an average crop of conifer seeds has held some for the winter in Algonquin Park and the boreal forest.



**BOHEMIAN WAXWING:** This species and the Pine Grosbeak will stay mainly in the boreal forest this winter because of the excellent crop of mountain-ash berries. A few may get to traditional wintering areas in central Ontario such as Ottawa and Peterborough where European Mountain-ash also has many berries. If you see Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks feeding together in the same tree, note the similarity in size and coloration of female Pines and Bohemians. Are they mimics?

**WHERE TO SEE WINTER FINCHES:** A winter trip to Algonquin Park is always worthwhile. Watch for finches in early morning along Highway 60. You may see finches on the highway eating road salt or salty sand. Finches have no fear of cars and hundreds are killed during big finch years. If you see or hear a flock of finches in flight, "squeak" loudly many times. Flying finches will often turn around and perch in nearby trees. The Visitor Centre and restaurant are open on weekends. The Visitor Centre has great feeders for finches and an observation deck. You also should see Gray Jays. Sometimes the suet feeder attracts Pine Marten and Fisher. Wolves are occasionally seen from the observation deck feeding on road-killed Moose put out by park staff. Arrangements can be made to see the feeders at the Visitor Centre during the week. For information on finches and wildlife sightings, call the Visitor Centre at 613-637-2828.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** This forecast is based on information from Dennis Barry, Barb Boysen, Bill Crins, Dave Elder, Nick Escott, Al Foley, Jean Iron, Barry Kinch, Bob Knudsen, Chris Leale, Bruce Mac-tavish, John Miles, Fred Pinto, Don Sutherland, Megan Thompson, Ron Tozer, Linda Tucker, Mike Turner, Bill Van Schip, and Mike Walsh. I appreciate the comments by Ron Tozer of Algonquin Park on a draft of this post.

**LITERATURE CITED:** Erskine, A.J. and R. McManus, Jr. 2003. Supposed periodicity of redpoll, *Carduelis* sp., winter visitations in Atlantic Canada. *Canadian Field-Naturalist* 117(4):611-620.

I hope that everybody sees boreal finches this winter.

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## Noteworthy Records 101: Part II

by Mike Morgante

This is the continuation of the "Noteworthy Records 101" article printed in the July 2004 issue of *The Prothonotary*. In the first part, an overview of the

noteworthy records was provided along with a description of what sightings are typically considered noteworthy. This installment will describe how the noteworthy records are distributed and used beyond *The Prothonotary* and how you can help make the compiler's work a little easier.

**Beyond *The Prothonotary*:** There are many uses of the noteworthy records after they are printed in *The Prothonotary*. David Suggs maintains a database of the noteworthy records from 1962 to present. This database is updated for the addition of new records every few years. It was just recently updated for noteworthy records through the end of 2002. The database is an extremely valuable tool for researching the occurrence and distribution of species, maximum counts, arrival and departure dates, and distinguishing trends such as finch "invasion" years. For example, a simple database query will provide answers to questions like 'when was the last Great Gray Owl recorded?', 'how many Painted Buntings have been documented in Western New York before?' and 'what are the spring arrival dates over the past ten years for Ruby-throated Hummingbird?' As the Niagara Frontier regional editor for *The Kingbird*, I reference this database during every quarterly article I prepare.

The noteworthy records database was instrumental in several recent B.O.S. projects. Preparation of the *B.O.S. Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region* relied on the noteworthy records database for an initial review of the occurrence of records for each species within the four quarters of each month. Tracking the typical weeks of arrival and departure for regularly-occurring species was especially useful and it was also very useful to describe the temporal distribution of rarities. The database query results were also used by the committee to help determine the frequency of occurrence in each time period (i.e. how common the species is). Without this foundation, development of the seasonal checklist would have been a much more arduous task than it already was. The seasonal checklist has likely been the greatest result to date of the B.O.S. noteworthy records database and the sightings provided by birders to B.O.S. for over four decades.

The *Verification Date Guide* is another B.O.S. publication that relies on the noteworthy records database. During the last technical revision of the date guide in 1998 (based on noteworthy records through 1997), the noteworthy records database was queried to provide a listing of all species verified since the previous edition. This was the foundation for the B.O.S. committee to review expansions and contractions to the date



ranges and also for species that require verification or not. The date guide will soon need another revision and a similar process is anticipated. The next update of the date guide will also have the benefit of utilizing the seasonal checklist.

The noteworthy records are also useful beyond B.O.S. projects and research. Sightings reported to B.O.S. are also used on the state and continental levels.

The B.O.S. noteworthy records typically represent the bulk of the sightings included in the Region 1 (Niagara Frontier) summaries in *The Kingbird*, the quarterly publication of the New York Ornithological Association (formerly Federation of New York State Bird Clubs). The noteworthy records are provided by the compiler and/or the statisticians to the Region 1 editor for use in the regional compilation (note: if you report your sightings to B.O.S., you do not need to also send them to the regional editor of *The Kingbird*). The most notable sightings and trends are typically discussed in the body of the Region 1 report in addition to the list of records and some are typically included in the statewide discussion "Highlights of the Season." A table of spring migrant arrival dates is also compiled based on the regional sightings and it is very interesting to compare arrival dates between the ten Kingbird regions.

The regional summaries and reports from *The Kingbird* are then used to compile a larger regional report for *North American Birds*, a quarterly journal of ornithological record published by the American Birding Association. Western New York sightings and trends are included in the Hudson-Delaware regional (New York, New Jersey, and Delaware) report and Ontario sightings may be used in the Ontario regional report. The *North American Birds* editors seek my input (as Region 1 editor for *The Kingbird*) and I consult with them and occasionally review their compilations. There are typically several notable sightings from Western New York that are discussed in the Hudson-Delaware report each quarter and the data allows for identification and evaluation of trends on a more regional level. The highlights of bird distribution and rarities on a continental level are then discussed in "The Changing Seasons" article in each issue of *North American Birds*. "The Changing Seasons" article is often fascinating and it is intriguing to see the "big picture" of birding across North America by each season.

Beyond use on the local, state, regional, and national levels as described above, the noteworthy records serve as a long running source of data for

research. The database of noteworthy records has been used in support of writing species accounts in *Bull's Birds of New York*, identifying potential Important Bird Areas in the Audubon New York selection process, and reviewing endangered and threatened species by NYSDEC. Through the years, various academic researchers and birders have utilized the noteworthy records database and reports to B.O.S. as well.

**How You Can Help the Compiler:** Now that you have read about the many uses of your sightings, hopefully you have been convinced to report. Here's how you can help make it easier for the B.O.S. compiler. The compiler spends a lot of time preparing the noteworthy records each month. I estimated that it took me 4-to-10 hours each month to complete all the necessary tasks. The months of April, May, September, October, and November usually took much longer than the other months due to an increase in the number of records. As opposed to not reporting at all, I encourage records to be sent in any shape, size, or form. However, it will reduce the processing time by the compiler if the following guidelines are followed.

First of all, you must send in records to the compiler. The statisticians do not currently allow any "second-hand" reports to be used in the Noteworthy Records. Reports to Dial-a-bird or posted to internet listservs do not go into the Noteworthy Records unless sent directly to the compiler or their use is directly authorized by the observer. (There are some aspects of this compiling rule that should be re-evaluated. I hope to elaborate on them in a future article.)

It is extremely beneficial to the compiler if you submit your sightings in the same format as the Noteworthy Records. This means that the records are sorted in taxonomic order in columns by species, date, number, location, observers (see any issue of *The Prothonotary* as an example). Sort your sightings by species, not by date. For example, list all your Common Loon reports for the month in rows, then the next species in rows. It takes the compiler a lot more time if your records are submitted for all species seen on the 4<sup>th</sup>, then all seen on the 11<sup>th</sup>, etc. Do not combine sightings from different locations on the same line, even if they occurred on the same date. The noteworthy records must be separated by distinct locations.

It is preferable to have the sightings typed, and if not, at least written out neatly. There were many times when I wasn't sure what a hand written report was for. Fortunately, most people submitting reports had them printed out from a computer database or spreadsheet.



The note in *The Prothonotary* indicates “please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the compiler”. It is important for the compiler to get a jump start on records, especially during migration months. However, all records are important and if you are running a little behind, contact the compiler by email or call and let him/her know that your reports are on the way. The compiler is to have the completed draft noteworthy records to the Statisticians by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the following month. If the late records do not make it in for the proper month, it is the responsibility of the statisticians to include them in the addendum at the end of the year (and the records will still be entered into the noteworthy records database).

This concludes Part 2 of this article. The next installment will provide more explanation on why you should be reporting your sightings and will include a review of current reporting patterns.

## Birding Quiz

By Mike Morgante

For some birders, one of the highlights of fall birding is watching the migration of diving ducks along Lake Ontario, and to a lesser extent along Lake Erie. “Lake watching” is best done with a good spotting scope. One of the identification challenges of lake watching is distinguishing the three scoter species: White-winged, Surf, and Black. This quiz examines the scoters.

### Questions:

1. Which scoter species (adult male) has a white head patch?
2. Which scoter species (adult male) has a yellow/orange knob on its bill?
3. Which scoter species (adult male) has a white “comma” mark below the eye?
4. Does the White-winged Scoter always show a white wing patch?
5. Which scoter species has the roundest head?
6. Which scoter species is the most common in the B.O.S. Study Area?
7. Which scoter species is the most common on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts?
8. List the scoter species in decreasing order of typical size.

9. Which scoter species (female and 1<sup>st</sup>-winter) has clean, pale cheeks?
10. Which scoter species is known as the “skunk duck”?
11. Which scoter species breeds the farthest south in North America?

### Answers:

1. The adult male Surf Scoter has a large white patch on the back of the head and a small white patch near the forehead.
2. Black Scoter.
3. White-winged Scoter.
4. No. The wing patch (secondaries) is not always visible when the bird is sitting on the water, especially on females and immature males. Identification must be made based on other field marks in this circumstance. The patch is distinctive when in flight.
5. Black Scoter. This is a useful field mark, especially when observing in flight.
6. White-winged Scoter is the most common in all seasons.
7. Surf Scoters greatly outnumber the other two species on the coasts.
8. White-winged is the largest, Surf is in the middle, Black is the smallest (although Black is slightly stockier than the slimmer Surf).
9. Black Scoter. This field mark is very useful when observing in flight, even at a significant distance.
10. Surf Scoter.
11. White-winged Scoter breeds on ponds south to the Canadian prairie, not far from the U.S. border.



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## October – December Calendar

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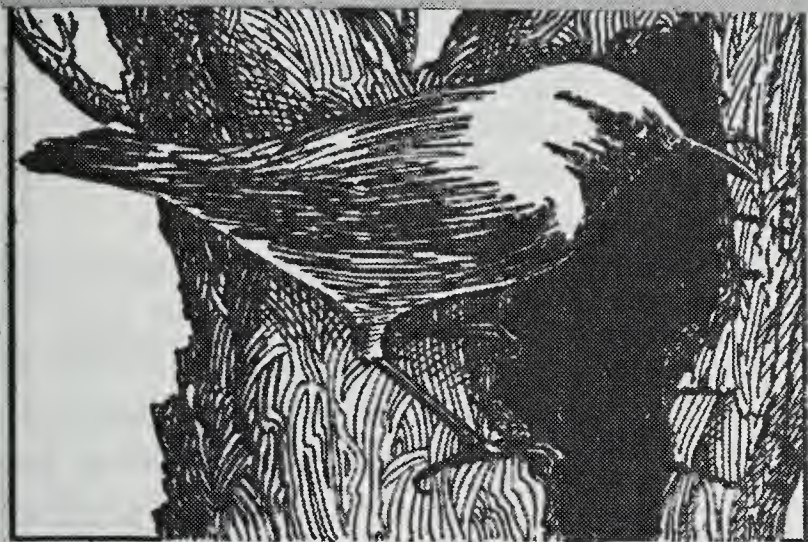


Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

- October 23: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip** for fall migrants. Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or [dannapotter@wzrd.com](mailto:dannapotter@wzrd.com)). Meet at 8 a.m. at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is on the east side of Route 78 at Route 104.
- October 27: BOS Meeting** at 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room of the Buffalo Science Museum. Bob DeLeon will discuss the May Bird Count and President Terry Yonker will discuss results of the August Shorebird Count. We will vote on changes to the bylaws of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.
- November 13: Saturday. B.O.S. 75th Anniversary Dinner** will be held at the Youngstown Yacht Club.
- November 14: Niagara River joint trip with Rochester GOS**, for gulls and waterfowl. Meet at 9:00 AM at Fort Niagara State Park in the parking lot just outside the old fort. Leaders: BOS Mike Hamilton (881-6709 or [mhsr@wzrd.com](mailto:mhsr@wzrd.com)) and GOS Bob Spahn.
- December 4: Saturday. Niagara River for Gulls.** Meet at 8:00 AM at the upstream parking lot on Goat Island (no fee at this time of year). If the bridge to Goat Island is closed, we will meet at the bridge entrance. Leader: Willie D'Anna (731-4348 or [dannapotter@wzrd.com](mailto:dannapotter@wzrd.com)).
- December 8: Buffalo Ornithological Society Annual Holiday Celebration** at 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room of the Buffalo Science Museum. Please bring a treat to share and enjoy an evening of birding friendship.



# The PROTHONOTARY



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## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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### THE MONTH: September

*by Tim Baird*

Weather records for Buffalo show that summer made a belated appearance in western New York in September. With 71% of possible sunshine, September easily beat June, July, and August at 59%, 40%, and 49% respectively. The average temperature was 65.2 degrees Fahrenheit coming in at 3.7 degrees above September's average. The increase in sunshine and temperature was a welcome change from the cool and wet character of most of the 2004 spring and summer seasons in our region.

While the sunny weather undoubtedly assisted migration and observation of passerines, consistently high water from a wet summer made for few exposed mudflats and gravel bars along streams which limited shorebird observations in some parts of the southern tier.

Buffalo's September total precipitation of 4.07 inches was 0.23 inches above normal for the month, and most of the rain arrived over the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> with the remnants of Hurricane Frances. Buffalo International Airport measured 3.93 inches from Frances making the precipitation from the storm nearly the total for the month. This low pressure system brought some gusty winds, and the rain caused some creeks to overrun their banks. Buffalo escaped most of the effects of Ivan, the second hurricane to affect the area in September. Areas south and east of Buffalo endured additional significant precipitation as rain left over from Hurricane Ivan soaked the region on the

17<sup>th</sup>. Tropical systems sometimes bring pelagic species to the Great Lakes region, but the lack of reports indicates this was not the case with these slow moving storms.

September reacquaints bird watchers with species that have spent the summer north of us for nesting in the expanses of Canada. Species we only encounter during migrations are always exciting to see. This can be a challenging and frustrating month as immatures appear and adults may sport plumages quite different and much more subtle than those seen in spring. The Western Sandpiper(s) documented by Peter Yoerg on the 5<sup>th</sup> and Bill Watson on the 8<sup>th</sup> at Rock Point Provincial Park exemplifies the identification challenge some species exhibit.

Peter Yoerg relates a rough estimate of hearing "200 to 500 calls per minute" overhead during the night of September 7-8<sup>th</sup> indicating a good migratory movement on light east and northeast winds before the rains from Frances arrived. Bill Watson and Jim Pawlicki visited several areas on the Niagara Peninsula on the 8<sup>th</sup> and totaled 64 species.

Outside of Bill Watson and Jim Pawlicki adding a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow from Amherst on the 27<sup>th</sup> to the yearly list for the BOS Region, the records do not indicate notably unusual species. The timing of a Rough-legged Hawk seen by Douglas Beattie on the 18<sup>th</sup> is noteworthy as its appearance is about a month earlier than typical for this species. This writer hopes that an early Rough-legged Hawk does not presage an early winter.

Few reports of Common Nighthawks continue to bode for a bleak future for this species. Only 13 individuals were reported, with Paul Hess observing 8 of

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those on the 7<sup>th</sup> in Tonawanda. This species is of "special concern" in New York State. It has been suggested that the American Crow increasingly invading urban areas is reducing the nesting success of Common Nighthawks. If predation by American Crows is a significant factor in reducing our local nighthawk populations, will the negative impact by West Nile Virus on crows help nighthawks?

Contrary to declining species, there are some birds that are less than welcome by many people, and are increasing in spite of our attitudes toward them. Double-crested Cormorants continue to overwhelm us. Reports of Mute Swan, including 7 immature birds seen by Bill Watson and others near the mouth of Twelve Mile

human waste water should be attractive to so many birds and people who are interested in birds. This location is a good illustration of the importance of nutrient recycling in nature, and that 'waste' is a concept of human culture, not natural systems.

Dean DiTommaso, and Bill Bogacki ended the month on a high note with a White-eyed Vireo at Tiffit Farm Nature Preserve on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

September is a month of transition for seasons and birds in western New York. The month starts with summer like temperatures, and the trees are filled with leaves starting to display new colors. Migrating warblers and vireos compliment this scene by adding their own colors. By month's end, many leaves have fallen, shades of brown begin to dominate, and the air has cooled. Now the sparrows come blending their soft browns.



*Gray-cheeked Thrush photographed by Willie D'Anna at Rock Point Provincial Park on September 25, 2004.*

Creek, bring to mind the perplexing move toward protecting this non-native species under the United States Migratory Bird Act.

September's migrating Wood Warblers always attract birders' attentions. Warblers made a good showing as 21 species were reported as noteworthy for the region; however numbers of individuals were not spectacular. Some exceptions were a notable report by Douglas Beattie of 7 Orange-crowned Warblers for the Town of Bethany on the 17<sup>th</sup>, Mike Morgante's observation of 8 Black-throated Green Warblers in Chestnut Ridge Park on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Bill Watson's report of 6 Blackpoll Warblers at Rock Point Provincial Park on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant continues its attraction to September waterfowl, notably the now regular appearance of Eared Grebes, and hundreds of Northern Shovelers, and Ruddy Ducks. I suppose it might be considered ironic that processed

Prothonotary, vol 70; issue 9 corrections: The MONTH: Lesser Sandpiper morphed from its correct name, Least Sandpiper. Noteworthy Records: The total species for the year and new species for the month should have been 278 and 8, respectively.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Loon	8	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
"	18	4; 1	Wilson; Somerset	D'Anna
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	12; 27	3; 2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
D.-crested Cormorant	4; 15	170; 923	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	6; 14	500; 300	Buffalo Harbor; Somerset	Morgante
"	8; 25	600; 220	Rock Pt. PP; Buff. Harbor	Watson
"	20	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Great Egret	5; 26	2; 2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	26	2; 6	Tifft NP; Times Beach	Yoerg, Henderson
"	6; 7; 27	5; 5; 5	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	8	3	Ft. Erie	Watson
"	12; 27	3; 7	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	12; 21	6; 2	Iroquois NWR; Times Beach NP	Watson
"	16	1	Machias	DeSha
"	20	1	Beaver I. SP	Hess
Black-cr. Night-Heron	8	1	Pt. Colborne	Watson
"	17	3	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
Mute Swan	5	13	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	8; 25	14; 2	Ft. Erie	Watson
"	26	9 ( <u>7 imm</u> )	Wilson-Tusc. SP	Watson et al (BOS)
Gadwall	8	2	Beaver I. SP	Hess
American Wigeon	12	1; 1	Batavia WWTP; Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	18	10	Wilson	D'Anna
Northern Shoveler	12; 27	134; 279	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Northern Pintail	18	48	Wilson	D'Anna
"	27	26	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	12; 27	11; 48	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	30	3	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Greater Scaup	<u>9F</u>	1	Wilson	Watson
"	25; 27	1; 1	Rock Pt. PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
Lesser Scaup	8	2	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
"	12; 27	3; 6	Batavia WWTP	Watson
White-winged Scoter	18	3	Wilson	D'Anna
Common Merganser	4	37	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	8; 25	5; 67	Rock Pt. PP; Morgan's Pt.	Watson
Red-br. Merganser	18; 19	1; 1	Somerset; Wilson	D'Anna
"	25; 27	22; 1	Morgan's Pt; Batavia WWTP	Watson
Ruddy Duck	12; 27	259; 260	Batavia WWTP	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Osprey	1	1	West Seneca	Turisk
"	12	2	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Bald Eagle	6	1	Darien Lakes SP	Holmes
"	12	2 imm	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	19; 26	1 ad; 1 imm	Dunnville; Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	1 imm	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Broad-winged Hawk	1	2	Birdsall	Brooks
"	5	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
Rough-legged Hawk	<u>18F</u>	1	Bethany	Beattie
Merlin	<u>2</u> - 30	4 recs; 5 max	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	12	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
"	21	1	Allegany SP	DeSha, Baird
Peregrine Falcon	29	2	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Black-bellied Plover	6; 12	26; 15	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
"	8; 25; 26	4; 3	N. shore, L. Erie	Watson
"	19	3	Wilson	D'Anna
"	26	9	Woodlawn SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Amer. Golden-Plover	8; 25	1; 4	Dunnville	Watson
"	12	5	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
Semipalmated Plover	8; 25	11; 3	Rock Pt. PP; Ft. Erie	Watson
Greater Yellowlegs	6; 11; 27	2; 2; 2	Times Beach NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	8; 27	1; 6	Rock Pt. PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	21	4	Times Beach NP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Lesser Yellowlegs	12; 27	6; 5	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Whimbrel	11	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	19	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Ruddy Turnstone	5; 6	5; 3	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	8	2	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
"	12	2; 1	Rock Pt. PP; Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
Red Knot	5; 6	4; 4	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	8	3	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Sanderling	8; 12	11; 1	Rock Pt. PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	18	5	Wilson	D'Anna
Semipalm. Sandpiper	8; 12	59; 2	Rock Pt. PP; Batavia WWTP	Watson
<u>Western Sandpiper</u>	5	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg
"	8	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Least Sandpiper	8	19; 2	Rock Pt. PP; Newfane	Watson
"	27	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
White-r. Sandpiper	5; 6	1; 2	Long Beach Ont; Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	12	2	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
Baird's Sandpiper	5; 12	2; 2	Ft. Erie; Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
"	5; 6; 19	1; 1; 6	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
Pectoral Sandpiper	5; 6	5; 3	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	8	3	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
"	12	14	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
Dunlin	5; 6; 19	1; 1; 1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
Stilt Sandpiper	12	4	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson
Buff-br. Sandpiper	12	2	Dunnville	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
American Woodcock	25	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
Little Gull	5	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson, Crowell
"	8	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Caspian Tern	6; 14	2; 4	Bird I. Pier; Buffalo	Morgante
"	8	9	Beaver I. SP	Hess
"	8; 9	5; 3	Rock Pt. PP; Wilson	Watson
"	28	1	Wilson	Potter, DiTommaso
Common Nighthawk	1	1	Wilson-Tusc. SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	3	2	Deveaux Woods SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	7	8	Tonawanda	Hess
"	14	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	17	1	UB south campus	Yoerg
Chimney Swift	27	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Ruby-t. Hummingbird	2 - 25	6 recs; 2 max	Bethany	Beattie
"	4	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Pawlicki, Watson
"	22	2	Wilson	D'Anna
"	22	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Red-headed Wdpr.	1	1	Hamburg (feeder)	Turisk
"	5	2	Ft. Erie	Yoerg, Henderson
"	8	1	Ft. Erie	Watson
"	26	1	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
Yellow-b. Flycatcher	11	1	Alfred	Brooks
Least Flycatcher	18L	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Eastern Kingbird	18L	1	Bethany	Beattie
White-eyed Vireo	30	1	Tifft NP	DiTommaso
Yellow-thr. Vireo	26L	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Blue-headed Vireo	20	2	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Warbling Vireo	8L	1	Goat I.	Watson
Philadelphia Vireo	8	1	Goat I.	Watson
"	10	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	17	1	Tifft NP	Chilton
"	18	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	26	1	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Raven	1; 10	2; 2	Birdsall; Alfred	Brooks
"	25	1	Bear Creek SF	Chilton
Purple Martin	4	400	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson, Pawlicki
Tree Swallow	8	300	Goat I.	Watson
Red-br. Nuthatch	1; 11	10; 4	Birdsall; Alfred	Brooks
"	13	2	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	18F	8	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Carolina Wren	8	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
House Wren	26	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	18; 19	1; 3	Sinking Ponds; Beaver Meadow AC	Morgante
Winter Wren	5	1	Ward	Brooks
"	5	1	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
"	12	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	18F	2	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
"	21	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Golden-cr. Kinglet	1; 11	4; 2	Birdsall; Alfred	Brooks
"	26F	1	Ft. Niagara	Watson et al (BOS)



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	17F	1	Wilson	Potter
"	19	1	Beaver Meadow AC	Morgante
Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher	25L	2	Bethany	Beattie
Veery	10	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	17L	1	Wilson	Potter
Gray-cheeked Thrush	8F	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	18	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
"	24	3	Lancaster	Morgante
"	25	1	Tifft NP	Andrle, Bogacki
"	26	2	Tifft NP	Yoerg, Henderson
Swainson's Thrush	18	1	Sinking Ponds	Morgante
"	21	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	22	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	27	1	Franklinville	DeSha
Hermit Thrush	20F	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
"	26	1	Olcott	Watson et al (BOS)
Northern Mockingbird	25	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	26	1	Jos. Davis SP	Watson et al (BOS)
Blue-winged Warbler	4L	1	Beaver I. SP	Watson, Pawlicki
Tennessee Warbler	19	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	25	1	Ellicottville	DeSha
Orange-cr. Warbler	17F	7	Bethany	Beattie
"	17F	1	Tifft NP	Chilton
Nashville Warbler	3	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	4	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
"	8; 22	1; 1	Dunnville; Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	21	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Northern Parula	17F	1	Bethany	Beattie
Yellow Warbler	4	1	Goat I.	Watson
"	17L	1	Wilson	Potter
Chestnut-s. Warbler	8; 25	1; 1	Goat I.; Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Cape May Warbler	10F	1	Pomfret	Mosher
"	21	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	8	1	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	4	1	Beaver I. SP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	8	5	Dunnville	Watson
"	21	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	21	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Pine Warbler	12	1	Rock Pt. PP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	2	Rock Pt. PP	Watson
"	26	2	Olcott	Watson et al (BOS)
Palm Warbler	21F	1	Allegany SP	DeSha, Baird
"	26	1	Woodlawn SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Bay-breasted Warbler	4F; 25	1; 1	Goat I.; Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Blackpoll Warbler	4F	2	Goat I.	Watson, Pawlicki
"	19	1	Orchard Park	Morgante
"	22; 25	1; 6	Buckhorn I. SP; Rock Pt. PP	Watson
Black-and-white Warb.	3; 5	1; 1	Chestnut Ridge Pk; Orchard Park	Morgante
"	8	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	18	1	Sinking Ponds	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Ovenbird	26F	3	Tifft NP	Yocrg, Henderson
Northern Waterthrush	17F	1	Wilson	Potter
Hooded Warbler	18; 19	1; 1	Sinking Ponds; Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
"	19	1	Somerset	Potter
Wilson's Warbler	4	1	Goat I.	Watson, Pawlicki
"	13	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Scarlet Tanager	26	1	Jos. Davis SP	Watson et al (BOS)
* <u>Nelson's Sh.-t. Spar.</u>	27	1	Amherst	Watson et al
Lincoln's Sparrow	20F	1	Wilson	Potter, D'Anna
"	29	1	Pomfret	Mosher
White-thr. Sparrow	1; 11	4; 3	Birdsall; Alfred	Brooks
"	10F	1	Wilson	Potter
"	11	1	Bethany	Beattie
White-cr. Sparrow	26F	4	Jos. Davis SP	Watson et al (BOS)
Dark-eyed Junco	18F	1	Wilson	Potter, D'Anna
"	23; 25	2; 1	Allegany Co; Bethany	Beattie
Rose-br. Grosbeak	19	1	Beaver Meadow AC	Morgante
"	21	1	Tifft NP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Baltimore Oriole	4L	1	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson, Pawlicki

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year:** 278

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month:** 001

**Total for the year 2004:** 279

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

### **Birding Quiz** *By Mike Morgante*

Every year in November and December, birders travel to the Niagara River for the "great gull show". This quiz is designed to get you excited for the upcoming season by remembering some birding highlights from the River.

#### Questions

- Which small gull species (adult) is most readily identified by its dark underwings?
- What is the leg color for an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull?
- What are the two primary differences between the bill of a Black-headed Gull and a Bonaparte's Gull (adults)?
- A lingering swallow at Niagara Falls is most likely to be of this species.
- Name the mega-rarity gull species that was found on November 24, 1992 and lingered for several weeks at Niagara Falls (it was the only documented occurrence of this species on the Niagara River)?
- What "out-of-place" bird was the highlight of last year's (December 2003) B.O.S. field trip to Niagara Falls?
- What two shorebird species are the most likely to be seen in December near Niagara Falls?
- California Gull has been an annual occurrence on the Niagara River since what year?
- This large arctic visitor occasionally roosts on the rocks above the falls (when it does, you won't find any gulls standing near it).
- What is the highest count of gull species observed on the Niagara River in one day?

#### Bonus Questions

- Name all 19 gull species that have been identified on the Niagara River.
- What will be the 20<sup>th</sup> gull species to be identified on the Niagara River?

#### Answers

- Little Gull. Look anywhere for this species, but especially right above the Falls and near Artpark.
- Yellow.
- A Black-headed Gull has a red bill rather than the black bill of a Bonaparte's, and the bill of a Black-headed Gull is slightly larger.
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow. Look for them (and possibly other swallow species) just above the Falls into late November.
- Slaty-backed Gull.
- A juvenile Northern Gannet was observed below the control gates on the field trip (and for several days after).
- Dunlin and Purple Sandpiper.
- 1992.
- Snowy Owl. Look for them on the rocks above the falls, especially near the Control Gates.
- It is believed to be 15 species, in late November 1995.
  - Laughing, Franklin's, Little, Black-headed, Bonaparte's, Mew, Ring-billed, California, Herring, Thayer's, Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, Slaty-backed, Glaucous, Great Black-backed, Sabine's, Black-legged Kittiwake, Ross's, and Ivory.
  - Hopefully we'll find out soon! Possible candidates include: Yellow-legged, Black-tailed, Glaucous-winged, Heermann's, and Western.



## Brown-headed Cowbird Parasitism Project: Last Chance to Submit Data

by Bill Watson

Have you seen any evidence of Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism (such as a cowbird fledgling being fed or cowbird young or eggs in a nest) since 1965? If you have, please fill out and forward the Cowbird Coupon at the end of this article as **soon as possible** so that we can finalize this study. It is hoped that we will receive enough data to not only assess Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism during the Atlas 2000 period, but also revise the status of the cowbird in Western New York. The last time the status of the cowbird was evaluated in our area was in *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region* (Beadslee and Mitchell 1965).

The summer of 2004 was the last year of the Cowbird Parasitism Project and the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas (with the exception of a few unfinished blocks). In order to determine the length of the cowbird breeding season as well as the percentage of host species, the attached Cowbird Coupon should be filled out with as much information as possible. If you would prefer instead to complete an electronic copy of the Cowbird Coupon, please send your request to me at WilliamWatsonSr@aol.com and I will email you a form. If you are not on the internet call 716-695-2820, and I can mail you additional forms.

Last year we had the most records of any year with the submission of thirteen reports; however, this year only four reports have been received so far.

What should be reported? We are interested in all the data you have regarding incidents of Brown-headed Cowbird eggs in nest, unfledged young in nests, and fledglings dependent on adults. This will help us establish or examine the range of dates for cowbird eggs, nestlings, and fledglings in the Buffalo Ornithological Society study area. These data can further expand the species list parasitized by cowbirds. We welcome data from Canada, as well as the United States. So please, dust off those old records and report them now. Also be sure to fill out question (6) so that we will know how to treat data.

We are especially interested in data collected during the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas in 2000. Since an objective of this study is to determine the percentage of host species involved in cowbird parasitism, it is important that in 2004 all observations of cowbird parasitism are reported. If observers only report an unexpected host (which they are more likely

to remember) and fail to report often seen common occurrences (such as a Yellow Warbler feeding a fledgling cowbird) we will not have an accurate percentage of the cowbirds' host species in the B.O.S. study area.

Your help with this project will be greatly appreciated.

### BOS Official Cowbird Coupon

1. Host species \_\_\_\_\_
2. Nature of Parasitism, such as egg in nest, feeding young, etc.
3. Location, include County, Block number, and precise location, if possible.
4. Date of observation \_\_\_\_\_
5. Habitat (field, woods, wood lot, scrub, etc.) If the observation was in woods please estimate the distance into the woods from the nearest edge of the woods.
6. Indicate method you used in recording this data. Check one.  
\_\_\_ I obtained this data by recording all Brown-headed Cowbird observations in a field journal.  
\_\_\_ I took this information from my Breeding Bird Atlas Field Card that I carry when Atlasing.  
\_\_\_ Not sure. The year I made this observation I used both methods of Atlasing.  
please estimate: \_\_\_% time using journal \_\_\_% time using card  
\_\_\_ Data was collected before the Atlasing period during which time I recorded all instances of cowbird parasitism  
\_\_\_ Data was collected before the Atlasing period during which time I recorded only selected instances of cowbird parasitism.  
comments:
7. Name, address, and telephone number of observer.
8. Remarks (if any)

Send to: Bill Watson  
771 Fletcher Street Tonawanda, New York 14150  
WilliamWatsonSr@aol.com

(If you are not sure how to fill out any of the questions on the Official Cowbird Coupon please call the **Official Cowbird Coupon Help Line at 716-695-2820.**)



## New York State Ornithological Association

*submitted by Brenda Best (NYSOA)*

The New York State Ornithological Association Inc. (NYSOA) is not new. It has worked to protect birds, and support people interested in birds, for over 50 years as the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. Many individuals from across the United States and Canada, as well as bird clubs around the state, are members.

If you join as an individual member, there are many benefits. Members receive two publications. *The Kingbird* is NYSOA's quarterly journal where New York State bird sightings are documented. NYSOA divides New York State into ten Regions for birding purposes. A regional editor receives bird observations for the four seasons of the year from the birders in their region and sends them to *The Kingbird* editor for publication. When you receive *The Kingbird*, you get information on bird populations, frequencies, locations, and rarities. There are also photographs and articles relating to specific species, behaviors, breeding, migration, and other subjects. There is also a quarterly newsletter, *New York Birders*, that keeps members current on happenings such as conservation projects, field trips, and the annual publication of members' State and County lists.

NYSOA has an Annual Meeting one weekend every fall somewhere in New York State. There are many field trips to local birding spots led by local birders. A variety of exhibitors have paintings and merchandise for sale. On Saturday, the member club delegates meet to hear updates from the Officers and the Chairs of various committees. Elections are held. Issues important to our members are discussed and appropriate action is taken as needed. In the afternoon, there is a Papers Session with topics of interest to birders. Saturday evening's banquet includes awards presentations and a main speaker.

The most recent meeting was held in Ithaca in September, hosted by the Cayuga Bird Club. The next one will be held in Albany hosted by Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. This year's meeting began on Friday night with a buffet and tour of the new facilities at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. The Papers Session included a report of the effect of West Nile Virus on the crow population in New York, results of a habitat restoration project for Golden-winged Warblers, and a presentation that showed snow burrowing by Common Redpolls. At the Saturday banquet, the director of

the Lab, John Fitzpatrick, gave a presentation: *Birds Can Save the World: Revolutionary Opportunities for Citizen Science in the 21st Century*.

NYSOA follows both state and federal legislation related to preserving birds and their habitats. We are well known to legislators and have a very strong working relationship with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Currently, one of NYSOA's major projects is coordinating New York's second Breeding Bird Atlas project. In 1998 NYSOA published *Bull's Birds of New York State*, which documents the status, range, migration, and history of each species found in the state. We also maintain and publish the *Checklist of the Birds of New York State* which currently lists 460 species accepted by our Avian Records Committee as having occurred in the state.

Please consider joining the New York State Ornithological Association as an individual member. We need your support. For more information, contact Brenda Best, NYSOA Membership Chair, at P. O. Box 95, Durhamville, NY 13054 or [membership@nybirds.org](mailto:membership@nybirds.org).



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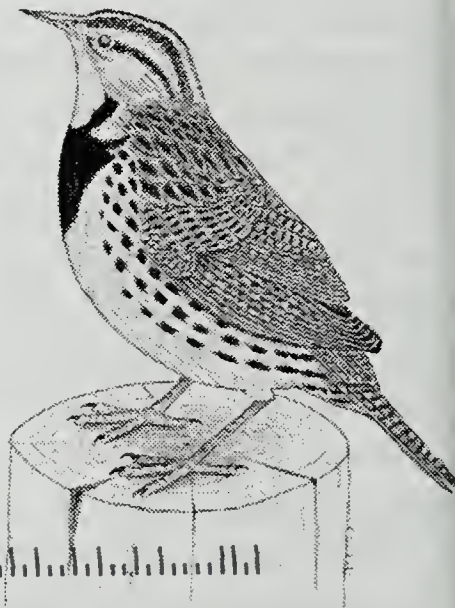
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BOS website

<http://www.bosbirding.org/>



Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

## November – December Calendar

**December 4: Saturday. Niagara River for Gulls.** Meet at 8:00 AM at the upstream parking lot on Goat Island (no fee at this time of year). If the bridge to Goat Island is closed, we will meet at the bridge entrance. Leader: Wil D'Anna (751-3637 or dannapotter@wzrd.com).

**December 8: Buffalo Ornithological Society Annual Holiday Celebration** 7:30 PM in the Cummings Room of the Buffalo Science Museum. Please bring a treat to share and enjoy an evening of birding friendship.

**December 18: Saturday. St. Bonaventure CBC.** Compiler: Regina M. VanScoy (716 - 925-7109 or vanscoyl@juno.com).

**December 18: Saturday. Wilson-Lake Plains CBC.** Compiler: Garner Light (772-5110 or garnerlight@hotmail.com).

**December 18: Saturday. Beaver Meadow CBC.** Compiler: Bill Michalek (800-377-1520 or michalek@buffaloaudubon.org). The compiler will provide breakfast refreshments at Beaver Meadows from 7:00-7:39am.

**December 19: Sunday. BOS Buffalo, NY Count.** Compiler: Bill Bogacki (674-5781 or 435-4426).

**December 19: Sunday. Jamestown.** Compiler: Bob Sundell (bird.central@madbbs.com or 716-484-2197).

**December 27: Monday. Niagara Falls ON-NY CBC.** Contact Willie D'Anna (751-3637 or dannapotter@wzrd.com) to work on the NY side. Contact Kayo Roy (905-892-4433 or kayoroy@niagara.com) to work on the Canadian side. All payments and data go to the compiler, Kayo Roy, 13 Kinsmen Court, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada L0S 1E3.

**December 27: Monday. Oak Orchard Count.** Compiler: Gail Seamans (519-937-5105 or gails@netacc.net).

**January 1: Saturday. Dunkirk-Fredonia CBC.** Compiler: Joanne Goetz (goetz@netsync.net or 716-673-1627) and Paul Farver (716-792-9042).

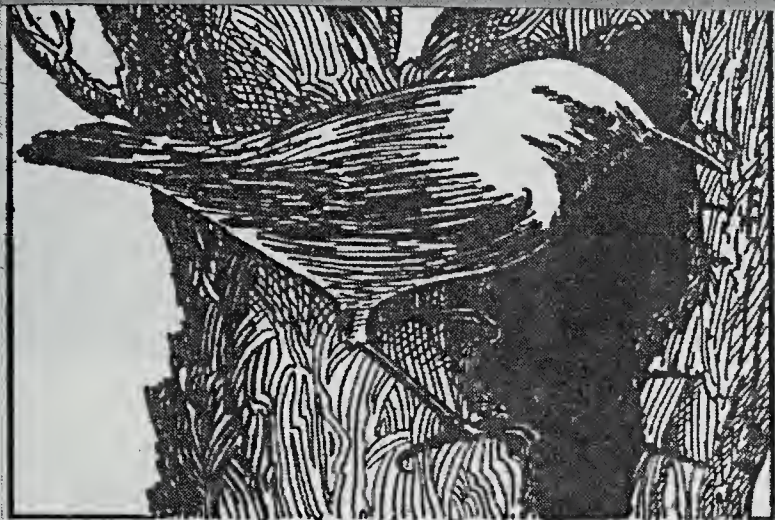
**January 2: Sunday. Hamburg-East Aurora CBC.** Compiler: Mike Zebeha. Prefers to be contacted by e-mail if possible (zebs@adelphia.net); otherwise 562-6987.



# The PROTHONOTARY

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Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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### THE MONTH: October

*by Bill Watson*

October was seasonal. The average temperature in October was 51.6 °F, only 0.9 °F above normal. Sunshine totaled only 35%, well below the normal 50% for October. Total precipitation was 2.98 inches, only 0.21 inches less than normal.

A major change developed in mid-month with much colder air and the development of lake effect rains. Nearly half the month's rain fell on the 16<sup>th</sup> with 1.33 inches at the airport, which broke the daily rainfall record of 0.72 inches set in 1919. This inclement weather was accompanied by snow (two to four inches east of the city) and very strong west winds which peaked at 44 mph on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 39 mph on the 17<sup>th</sup>. This weather blew birds inland producing our first jaegers of the season on the 17<sup>th</sup> with two jaeger species at Athol Springs along Lake Erie and two jaeger species (Pomarine or Parasitic) at Wilson along Lake Ontario. These excellent jaeger records were bettered on the 31<sup>st</sup> when a 41 mph peak west wind produced an amazing fifteen Parasitic Jaegers at Athol Springs. The previous high Parasitic Jaeger count was only four on October 19, 1975, at Olcott.

The same winds that pushed the jaegers close to shore on October 17 also produced the earliest ever and first ever October record of an ADULT Black-legged Kittiwake. Separation of this species from sec-

tion include bill color and markings, eye color, leg color, dark ear patch, flight characteristics, and overall jizz.) There are only seven records of adult Black-legged Kittiwakes and two of these in 1995 may have been the same bird.

Brett Ewald's two Black-legged Kittiwakes was a new species for our October Count's 69 year history. He found the two very early and very rare first winter Black-legged Kittiwakes off Sunset Island in Wilson.

Other October 10 Bird Count exceptional rarities include Black Vulture and Sandhill Crane. The Black Vulture seen by the Suggs in the Town of Pembroke is the first fall record of this species. The Sandhill Crane found in Haldimand County, Ontario is only the third October record. These observations are evidence of the recent regional expansion of these two species.

Range expansion for Common Raven continues. On the October Count, Kurt Fox found Genesee County's second record "in Darien on Chick Road being mobbed by over 75 American Crows." Since Niagara County had its second Common Raven record in August, observers should expect more sightings of this species along the Lake Plains in the future.

Additional October exceptionally rare species are the Golden Eagle, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, and Merlin. The immature Golden Eagle seen flying over Times Beach Nature Preserve on the 26<sup>th</sup> is the fifth October record. On October 3, a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was found at the same location as in the past few years, Cayuga Pool at Iroquois NWR. Merlinville (at University of Buffalo Main Street Campus) continues to grow in population, reaching seven individuals in October. The previous high count was six in October of last year. Peter Yeorg made visits on eight Octo-

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ond winter Ring-billed Gull requires study of their relative size, presence of solid black wing tips "ink dipped", pale primaries extending to the black tips, and a gray nape. (Editors note: other features for separa-



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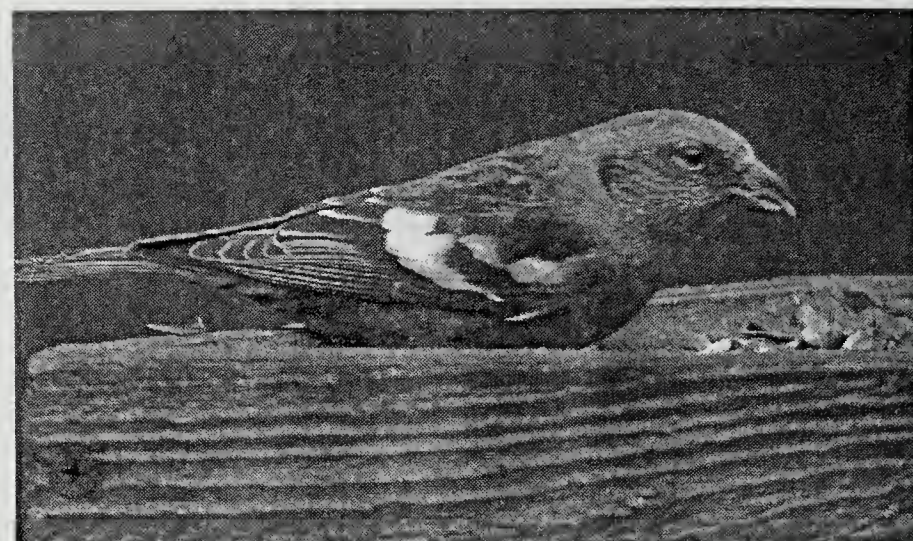
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ber days and was rewarded by finding seven Merlins on October 7, 8, and 18.

The White-winged Crossbill (shown at right) photographed at the D'Anna/Potter backyard feeder in Wilson is the earliest fall record of this species in the BOS Archives. The previous early date was from Queenston, Ontario on October 15, 1978, reported by the Klabundes. There is a late summer record of an immature White-winged Crossbill observed by Harold Mitchell at Morgan's Point on August 25, 1957. The other exceptionally early records for the month were the Bufflehead at the Batavia WWTP on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and two Rough-legged Hawks in Bethany on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Although the October 10 Count Northern Saw-whet



White-winged Crossbill, 14 Oct 2004, photo by Betsy Potter

Count's 69 year history that this species has been recorded. Only two non-count records of Eastern Kingbird are later, both in Ontario, from October 13.

Perhaps the most unusual late bird was the immature White-eyed Vireo documented by Bob Andrie at Tiff Nature Preserve on October 23. There has been only one other fall record of this species in the last 49 years, one by Betsy Brooks in Alfred on October 1, 1979. Beardslee and Mitchell suggest "there was an influx of this species during 1954, 1955, and 1956." There were two late fall records in 1955. This fall record, plus early December sightings at High Park, Toronto, and Hamlin Beach State Park, Monroe County, as well as, May records in our area in Ontario, and Erie, Wyoming, and Chautauqua Counties, and our first well documented nesting record at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute in Jamestown this June indicate that this was an irruptive year for White-eyed Vireo in our region.

With the recently published 45th supplement to the *Check-list of North American Birds* the American Ornithologist's Union's Committee on Classification and Nomenclature (Banks et al. 2004) split the *Branta canadensis* Canada Goose into two species: *B. Canadensis* (Canada Goose) and *Branta hutchinsii* (Cackling Goose). The larger *Branta Canadensis* (Canada Goose) includes seven subspecies: *B. c. canadensis* (Atlantic Canada Goose), *B. c. interior* (Hudson Bay Canada Goose), *B. c. maxima* (Giant Canada Goose), *B. c. moffitti* (Moffitt's or Great Basin Canada Goose), *B. c. parvipes* (Lesser Canada Goose), *B. c. occidentalis* (Dusky Canada Goose), and *B. c. fulva* (Vancouver Canada Goose). The smaller *Branta hutchinsii* (Cackling Goose) includes four subspecies: *B. h. hutchinsii* (Richardson's or Hutchins's Cackling Goose), *B. h. taverneri* (Taverner's or Alaska Cackling Goose), *B. h. minima* (Cackling Cackling Goose), and *B. h. leucopareia* (Aleutian Cackling

Owl, heard by Don Harris along the campground entrance to Golden Hill State Park, is eight days before the October 18 date in the *Verification Date Guide*, early fall observations of this species often go undocumented. A more realistic arrival date would be the first week of October.

Lingering birds during the month were Eastern Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo, Nashville Warbler, and Swainson's Thrush. The Nashville Warbler was only one day prior to the early date in the *Verification Date Guide*. On October 24 and 25 Doug Beattie found a Swainson's Thrush in "tangles...on the east side of Francis Road in the Town of Bethany." The only later fall record was October 31, 1964 in Kenmore reported by the Webster's.

On Hall Road in the Town of Somerset Alice McKale observed a flycatcher with a black back, wings, and tail and "a conspicuous very white band at the end of its tail." There are only four other years in the



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	20F	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	23	6	Somerset, Yates	D'Anna et al (BOS)
"	24	1	Somerset	Yoerg
Common Loon	13	40; 8	Somerset; Wilson	Watson
"	17	80	Wilson	D'Anna
"	20	14; 10	Somerset; Yates	Morgante
"	24	90	Somerset, Newfane	Yoerg, Henderson
Pied-billed Grebe	24	14	Allegany SP	Desha, Baird, Eaton
Horned Grebe	3F	2	Wilson	D'Anna
"	17	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	20	15	Yates	Morgante
Red-necked Grebe	20	1	Yates	Morgante
"	23	3	Somerset, Yates	D'Anna et al (BOS)
"	24	1	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	17	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki et al.
D.-crested Cormorant	1	654	Buckhorn I. SP	Watson
"	3	19	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	13	180	Somerset	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	20	95	Somerset	Morgante
Great Egret	2	4; 2	Tifft NP; Times Beach NP	Watson
"	2; 30	1; 8	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
"	3	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	3	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Yoerg, Henderson
"	20; 27	11; 16	Iroquois NWR	Turisk
"	20	7	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	27L	3	Ft. Erie	Hess
Black-cr. Night-Heron	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	31	2	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
Turkey Vulture	6	4	Elma	Holmes
"	18	5	Niagara River	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	29	3	Lancaster	Morgante
Snow Goose	15F	1 wh, 1 blu	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	20	5	Iroquois NWR	Turisk
"	20	1 blu	Somerset	Morgante
"	25	6	Porter	D'Anna
"	16	75	Alfred	Brooks
<u>Cackling Goose</u>	26F	2	Fonthill, Ont.	Ahara, Roy, Smith



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Brant	16F	9	Athol Springs	Andrle
"	17F	25	Athol Springs	Yoerg
"	23	3	Somerset	D'Anna et al (BOS)
"	31	1	Wilson	D'Anna, DiTommaso
Mute Swan	15	2 ad	Wilson	Watson, Lazarczyk
Tundra Swan	31F	9	Athol Springs	Yoerg, Henderson
American Wigeon	3	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	7	1	Newfane	D'Anna
"	17	35	Iroquois NWR	Watson
American Black Duck	3; 17	16; 10	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	24	2	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	27	8	Iroquois NWR	Turisk
Blue-winged Teal	3	12	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	27	2; 2	Iroq. NWR; Oak Orch.WMA	Turisk
Northern Shoveler	3; 17	194; 560	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	23	1	Somerset	D'Anna et al (BOS)
Green-winged Teal	3; 17	7; 11	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	13; 22	3; 8	Machias	Desha
Canvasback	17F	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	17F	3	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Redhead	2F	2	Bird I. Pier	Watson
Ring-necked Duck	17	38	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Pawlicki
Greater Scaup	3; 17	1; 1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki; Watson
"	18	700	Niagara Falls	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	19	4	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Lesser Scaup	3; 17	11; 17	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	18	30	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
Surf Scoter	3F	12	Bird I. Pier	Watson
"	6	9	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
"	17; 31	3; 2	Wilson	D'Anna
"	18	2	Niagara Falls, NY	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	23	4	Somerset	D'Anna et al (BOS)
White-winged Scoter	13	20	Somerset	Watson
"	18	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson, Lazarczyk
Black Scoter	6	9	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg, Henderson
"	23	2	Somerset	D'Anna et al (BOS)
"	24	10	Olcott	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	4	Wilson	D'Anna
"	31	3	Athol Springs	Andrle
Long-tailed Duck	17F	14	Wilson	D'Anna
"	31	1	Hamburg	Morgante
Bufflehead	3F	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	23	2	Somerset	D'Anna et al (BOS)
Common Goldeneye	31	3	Hamburg	Morgante
Hooded Merganser	3	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	17	10	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Pawlicki
"	20; 27	29; 79	Iroquois NWR	Turisk



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Common Merganser	5	2	West Seneca	Morgante
Red-br. Merganser	5	18	Machias	Desha
Ruddy Duck	3; 17	787; <u>1233</u>	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	20	2	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
Bald Eagle	2	1	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
"	3	2 ad, 1 imm	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	15	1 imm	Grand I.	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	22;28;29	2; 2; 2	Machias	Baird
"	23	6	Allegany SP	Desha, Baird, Eaton
"	23	1 imm	Farmersville	Morgante
"	27	2 ad	Iroquois NWR	Turisk
"	31	1	Queenston	S & T O'Donnell
Red-shouldered Hawk	13	1	Iroquois NWR	Turisk
"	7;8;12;29	1;1;1;2	Bethany	Beattie
Rough-legged Hawk	<u>9</u>	2	Bethany	Beattie
"	20	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	23	2	Yates	D'Anna et al (BOS)
"	24	1	Wilson	D'Anna
<u>Golden Eagle</u>	26F	1 imm	Times Beach NP	Andrle
Merlin	2	1	Bird I. Pier	Watson
"	7 - <u>29</u>	7 max	UB south campus	Yoerg
"	20	1	Somerset	Morgante
Peregrine Falcon	6	1	Gasport	Morgante
"	31	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Morgante
Virginia Rail	3	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Sora	23L	1	Machias	Desha
Common Moorhen	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	2	1	Oak Orchard WMA	S & T O'Donnell
"	3L	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Black-bellied Plover	3	6	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	3	1	Porter	D'Anna
Amer. Golden-Plover	3	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	3	3	Porter	D'Anna
"	6	1	Somerset	Morgante
Killdeer	2	50	Alabama	S & T O'Donnell
"	3	43	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Greater Yellowlegs	3; 17	16; 6	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	5; 7	1; 2	Machias	Desha
"	10	1	Marilla	Holmes
"	20; 27	10; 4	Iroquois NWR	Turisk
"	20	19	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	23	1	Yates	D'Anna et al
"	23	5	Randolph	Desha, Baird, Eaton
Lesser Yellowlegs	2	6	Times Beach	Watson
"	3; 17	19; 8	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	3	1	Newfane	D'Anna
Solitary Sandpiper	3; 7	1; 1	Newfane	D'Anna
Spotted Sandpiper	3L	1	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Least Sandpiper	3; 17L	3; 4	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
White-r. Sandpiper	3L	1	Batavia WWTP	Pawlicki, Watson
"	17	1	Hamburg	Yoerg
Pectoral Sandpiper	3; 7	12; 7	Newfane	D'Anna
"	5	2	Machias	Desha
"	23	1	Yates	D'Anna et al (BOS)
"	31	20	Golden Hill SP	D & D Suggs
Dunlin	15	4	Wilson	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	17	19	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
"	17	2	Wilson	D'Anna
"	20	21	Iroquois NWR	Morgante
"	23	6	Yates	D'Anna et al
Wilson's Snipe	3	1	Tonawanda WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	5	5	Machias	Desha
<u>Jaeger sp</u>	17F	2	Wilson	D'Anna
<u>Jaeger sp</u>	17F	2	Athol Springs	Yoerg
* <u>Parasitic Jaeger</u>	31	15	Athol Springs	Andrle, Rew, Yoerg et al
Little Gull	17	3	Lewiston	D'Anna
"	18	2	Queenston	Watson, Lazarczyk
Bonaparte's Gull	31	2000	Ft. Erie, Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
Lesser Black-b. Gull	18F	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	24	1	Cambria	Yoerg et al
"	31	3	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna, S & T O'Donnell, et al
"	31	1	Athol Springs	Yoerg et al
<u>Black-leg. Kittiwake</u>	17F	1 ad	Athol Springs	Yoerg
Common Tern	17	5	Lewiston	D'Anna
"	17	1	Hamburg	Yoerg
"	31	1	Niagara Falls	Potter et al
"	31	4	Niagara Falls, Ont.	S & T O'Donnell
"	31	1	Woodlawn Beach SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Common Nighthawk	2L	2	Tonawanda WMA	S & T O'Donnell
Chimney Swift	2L	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Eastern Phoebe	1 - 25	5 recs	Bethany	Beattie
"	24	3	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Shrike	18F	1	Lancaster	Morgante
White-eyed Vireo	<u>23</u>	1	Tifft NP	Andrle
Blue-headed Vireo	23	1	Ashford Hollow	Turisk
"	26L	1	Alfred	Brooks
Red-eyed Vireo	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Common Raven	3; 23	2; 2	Alfred; Ward	Brooks
"	10	1	Farmersville	J & K Landau
"	23	4	Allegany Reservoir	Desha, Baird, Eaton
Horned Lark	2	18	Alabama	S & T O'Donnell
"	6	50	Somerset	Morgante
<i>E. a. praticola</i>	13F	10	Somerset	Watson, Lazarczyk
Tree Swallow	3	200	Batavia WWTP	Watson
N. Rough-w. Swallow	18	60	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson, Lazarczyk
Tufted Titmouse	2	1	Oak Orchard WMA	S & T O'Donnell



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	11 - 30	1	Wilson	Potter, D'Anna
"	28	2	Niagara Falls (f)	Roberson
Red-br. Nuthatch	5 - 31	2	Niagara Falls (f)	Roberson
"	16; 26	1; 7	Alfred; Ward	Brooks
"	25; 30	1; 1	Bethany	Beattie
Brown Creeper	20;21;23	1; 2; 4	Alfred; Alfred; Ward	Brooks
Carolina Wren	1 - 29	9 recs; 1 each	Bethany	Beattie
"	3	1	Porter	D'Anna
"	6; 24	1; 2	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
House Wren	1;4	1; 1	Bethany	Beattie
Winter Wren	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
"	18; 21	2; 1	Alfred	Brooks
"	22	3	Deveaux Woods SP	S O'Donnell
Marsh Wren	2	1	Deveaux Woods SP	S & T O'Donnell
"	3	2; 2	Iroq. NWR; Ton. WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	25L	2	Bethany	Beattie; Mason
Gray-cheeked Thrush	2	1	Clarence	Morgante
"	3L	1	McCarty Hill SF	Desha
Swainson's Thrush	2	1	Clarence	Morgante
"	7	1	Tonawanda	Hess
"	<u>24</u> ; <u>25L</u>	1; 1	Bethany	Beattie
American Pipit	2	24	Alabama	S & T O'Donnell
"	3	300	Porter	D'Anna
"	6	30	Somerset	Morgante
"	13	8	Somerset	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	13	14	Machias	Desha
"	17	3	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Pawlicki
Orange-cr. Warbler	3	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
"	22	1	Blasdell	Turisk
Nashville Warbler	<u>26L</u>	1	Tifft NP	Chilton
Magnolia Warbler	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	24L	1	Wilson	D'Anna, Potter
Bl.-thr. Green Warb.	2	1	Tifft NP	Watson
Pine Warbler	13L	1	Bethany	Beattie
American Redstart	20L	1	Alfred	Brooks
Amer. Tree Sparrow	29F	1	Lancaster (f)	Morgante
"	29F	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
Chipping Sparrow	6; 8	1; 1	Bethany	Beattie
"	10	10; 5	Sinking Ponds; Marilla	Holmes
"	24	1	Alfred	Brooks
"	24	1	Grand I.	S & T O'Donnell
"	29L	1	Lancaster (f)	Morgante
Vesper Sparrow	20L	1	Somerset	Morgante
<u>Nelson's Sh.-t. Spar.</u>	3L	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
Fox Sparrow	20F	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	24	2	Golden Hill SP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	25	1	Niagara Falls (f)	S & T O'Donnell
"	26	1	Lancaster (f)	Morgante



<u>Species</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
"	17L	1	Iroquois NWR	S & T O'Donnell
Swamp Sparrow	10	5	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	30	1	Iroquois Nwr	S & T O'Donnell
White-cr. Sparrow	9	2	Bethany	Beattie
Lapland Longspur	6F	1	Somerset	Morgante
"	13	2	Somerset	Watson, Lazarczyk
Snow Bunting	31	50	Athol Springs	Yoerg, Henderson
Eastern Meadowlark	24	16	Randolph	Desha
Rusty Blackbird	3F	5	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg
"	17	3	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Pawlicki
"	23	3	Machias	Desha
"	24	150	Buckhorn I. SP	S & T O'Donnell
Purple Finch	6	3	Somerset	Morgante
"	8	1	Niagara Falls (f)	S O'Donnell
* White-w. Crossbill	<u>14F - 18</u>	1	Wilson (f)	D'Anna, Potter
"	<u>15</u>	1	Wilson	Watson
Pine Siskin	6F	2	Somerset	Morgante
"	9; 28	1; 6	Colden	J & K Landau; J Landau
"	11	4	Marilla	Holmes
"	11 - 31	30 max	Wilson (f)	Potter, D'Anna
"	15	2	Wilson	Watson, Potter, Lazarczyk
"	16	1	Niagara Falls (f)	S & T O'Donnell
"	18	2	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	23	10	Somerset	D'Anna et al (BOS)
"	27	3	Bethany	Beattie

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year:** 279

**Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month including the October Count:** 004

**Total for the year 2004:** 283

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

**December 18: Saturday. St. Bonaventure CBC.** Compiler: Regina M. VanScoy (716 - 925-7109 or vanscoy1@juno.com).

**December 18: Saturday. Wilson-Lake Plains CBC.** Compiler: Garner Light (772-5110 or garnerlight@hotmail.com).

**December 18: Saturday. Beaver Meadow CBC.** Compiler: Bill Michalek (1-800-377-1520 or michalek@buffaloaudubon.org). Breakfast at 7:00 am.

**December 19: St. Catharines CBC.** Compiler: Marcie Jacklin (mjacklin@brocku.ca or 905-892-3108).

**December 19: Sunday. BOS Buffalo, NY Count.** Compiler: Bill Bogacki (674-5781 or 435-4426).

**December 19: Sunday. Jamestown.** Compiler: Bob Sundell (bird.central@madbbs.com or 716-484-2197).

**December 27: Monday. Niagara Falls ON-NY CBC.** Contact Willie D'Anna (751-3637 or dannapotter@wzrd.com) to work on the NY side. Contact Kayo Roy (905-892-4433 or kayoroy@niagara.com) to work on the Canadian side. All payments and data go to the compiler, Kayo Roy, 13 Kinsman Court, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada L0S 1E3.

**December 27: Monday. Oak Orchard Count.** Compiler: Gail Seamans (585-937-5105 or gails@netacc.net).

**January 1: Saturday. Dunkirk-Fredonia CBC.** Compiler: Joanne Goetz (goetz@netsync.net or 716-673-1627) and Paul Farver (716-792-9042).

**January 2: Sunday. Hamburg-East Aurora CBC.** Compiler: Mike Zebehazy. Contact by e-mail if possible (zebs@adelphia.net); otherwise, 662-6987.

**January 2: Sunday. Port Colborne Christmas Bird Count.** Meet at McDonald's (corner of Highway 3 and 58 in Port Colborne) at 8 AM. Compiler: Drew Campbell (drew.campbell@gm.com or voice mail at 1-800-539-2329).

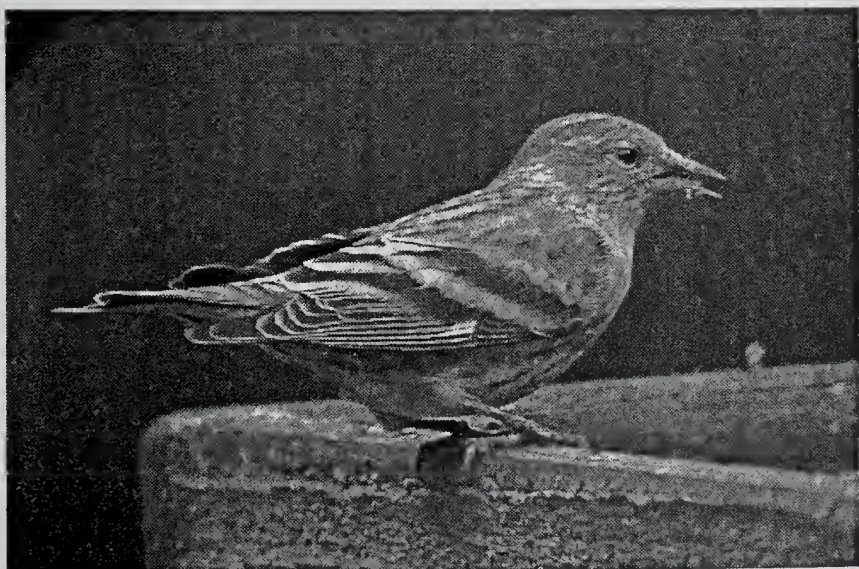


Goose). For information on how to identify these two species and their subspecies see [http://www.sibleyguides.com/canada\\_cackling.htm](http://www.sibleyguides.com/canada_cackling.htm) on the Internet.

This split gave Kayo Roy the privilege of being the first person in the BOS to document a goose under the name Cackling Goose. Of course, all previously documented Richardson's Geese will now fall into this "new" species. This well photographed Cackling Goose was found in Fonthill, Ontario. There is only one previous BOS Ontario record: a Richardson's Goose in Fort Erie on November 11, 2002. Oddly, this is the first autumn in five years that a sizable flock of this small goose has not been seen in Iroquois NWR. Mike Morgante and Willie D'Anna are of the opinion that this fall flock may have been there again, but was missed by birders.

The Batavia WWTP continues to attract large numbers of ducks with 1233 Ruddy Ducks and 560 Northern Shovelers on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The previous high count of Northern Shovelers in the BOS territory of 420 was at the Batavia W.W.T.P. on October 19, 2002. For the fifth October in a row "exceptionally rare" Eared Grebes were observed here. This year two were documented on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Maximum Double-crested Cormorant counts at the electrical towers near Buckhorn Island State Park continue to decline in October from their high in the year 2000. This year's maximum October count of 654 is the lowest since 1994. The 2,274 cormorants on this year's October Count also show a decline from the high of 2671 in the year 2000. Unlike the Buckhorn data, the October Count decline in Double-crested Cormorants has not demonstrated a consistent downward trend over the last four years. Nevertheless, these data may indicate a decline in our migratory cormorant population in the beginning of the new millennium.



Pine Siskin, 11 Oct 2004, photo by Willie D'Anna

One of the most interesting records of the month, *Buteo jamaicensis calurus* or Western Red-tailed Hawk, was filed by D'Anna and "noted of interest". He noted in part that the "size and shape appeared no different than the typical Eastern birds..." but "the head, ventral body including the throat, and underwing coverts appeared blackish, though not jet black, throughout the observation."

Banks, R. C., C. Cicero, J. L. Dunn, A. W. Kratter, P. C. Rasmussen, J. V. Remsen, J. D. Rising, D. F. Stotz. 2004. Forty-fifth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds. *Auk* 121:985-995.

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Suggs, David. Custodian of the B. O. S. Noteworthy Records Data Base 1964 - 1997 compiled by Dean DiTommaso et al.

Suggs, David et. al. 2002. *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds: The Niagara Frontier Region*. Buffalo Ornithological Society.

Thanks to Mike Morgante, Willie D'Anna, and Peter Yeorg for information on Richardson's Geese.

## Isotope Fingerprints: Using Hydrogen Isotopes to Track Bird Populations.

by Jack Skalicky

The breeding ranges of most nesting songbirds in North America are fairly well defined, in many cases to extraordinary detail, e.g., Cerulean Warbler (Rosenberg, et. al., 2000;). This knowledge has been largely shaped during the past several decades from the USGS Breeding Bird Survey (BBS; [www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/bbs.html](http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/bbs.html)), State Breeding Bird Atlas projects, and basic research. In contrast, winter ranges and connecting migratory routes are less defined. This is of concern in light of the dramatic declines in almost all songbird populations during recent decades ([www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/bbs.html](http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/bbs.html)). With continuing declines, there is increased urgency to understand this phenomenon, to formulate solutions, and put them into practice.

Our inadequate understanding of songbird wintering ranges and migratory routes comes despite tremendous effort to address this fundamental question with bird banding (mark-recapture) techniques. Though bird banding has contributed invaluable information to ornithology, the extraordinarily low recapture rates for small passerines has severely limited its



usefulness in connecting summer and winter ranges. Table 1 lists banding statistics for genera *Catharus* and *Hylocichla* thrushes demonstrating the remarkably low recapture rates, less than 0.25% and as low as 0.003%, for Gray-cheeked Thrush [data from USGS

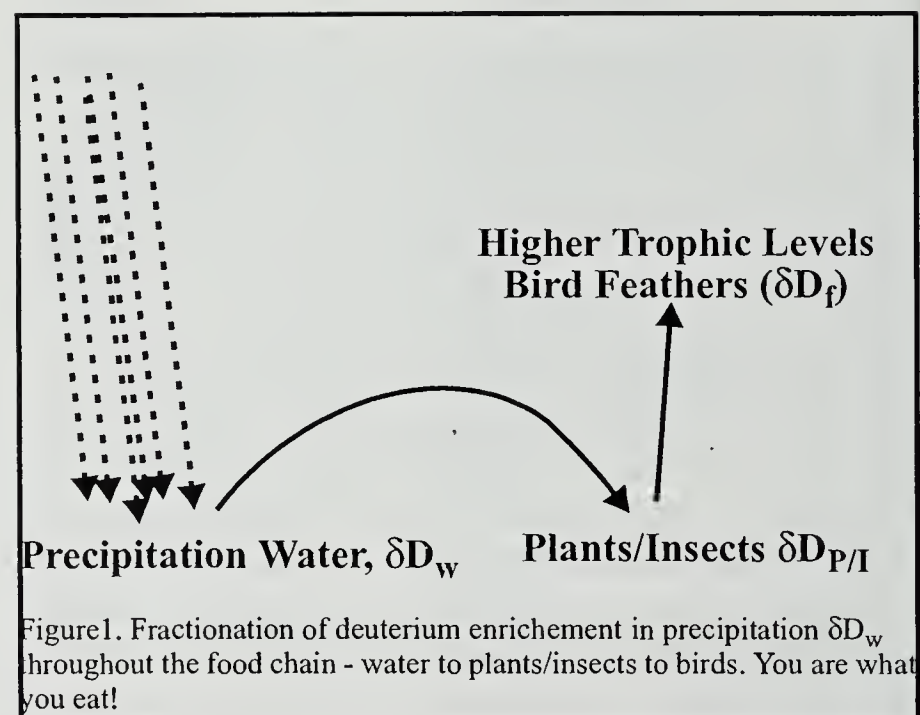
TABLE 1. Number of captures and recaptures for North American Thrushes (*Catharus* and *Hylocichla*) banded between 1955-2002.

Species	# Banded	#Recaptured	Percent Recovered
Hermit Thrush	199,443	399	0.200
Swainson's Thrush	395,068	265	0.070
Veery	97,780	232	0.230
Gray-ch. Thrush	59,699	19	0.003
Gray-ch./Bicknell's	31,445	27	0.085
Bicknell's Thrush	876	1	0.114
Wood Thrush	118,626	1,125	0.950

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (www.pwrc.usgs.gov)]. Compounding this situation, only a small fraction of the recaptures occur on the winter grounds, instead, a large fraction of total recaptures are near the initial banding location (www.pwrc.usgs.gov) providing little useful information in establishing a migration vector or wintering range coordinates. This situation solicits a more robust method for connecting bird populations between summer and winter ranges. Isotope tracking provides a partial solution – in principle giving 100% recovery rates.

**What is isotope tracking and how does it occur?** Figure 1 shows a sketch of the labeling pathway. Precipitation across North America has the unique physical property of exhibiting latitude-dependent deuterium enrichment. The local enrichment eventually translates to all trophic levels of the food chain (Figures 1 and 2), including plants, insects, and birds (Hobson and Wassenaar, 1997 and references therein).

**What is deuterium and how is it measured?** Elemental hydrogen occurs as one of three natural occurring isotopes, protium (P), deuterium (D), and tritium (T). Protium and deuterium are stable isotopes while tritium is unstable, i.e., radioactive. Of the stable isotopes, protium is by far the most abundant on our planet (~99.9844%) while deuterium is relatively rare (0.0156%). Tritium is the most rare, occurring in only 1 of  $10^{17}$  hydrogen atoms. It will not be considered further for this discussion. Global precipitation water ( $H_2O$ ,  $\delta D_w$ ) has variable deuterium enrichment or depletion, with a distinct latitude-dependent pattern across North America (Figure 2 and Hobson and Was-



senaar, 1997). Enrichment is reported relative to an international standard, the Vienna Standard Mean Ocean Water Standard (VSMOW) and is expressed as a  $\delta D_{w,f}$ , where  $\delta D$  is the difference from the international standard (expressed in parts-per-thousand from VSMOW) while the subscript reports on the sample, which here is either precipitation water (w) or feather (f).

**How is a bird labeled with deuterium?** Songbirds of hatch year age and most adults will grow new feathers on or near the breeding grounds. The feather will incorporate the local deuterium content – fingerprinting the feather to a particular latitude (Figure 2 and legend). Following growth of a feather, it is inert and stable, trapping the deuterium fingerprint until the annual cycle repeats itself. In essence, ALL birds are isotope marked to their location during feather growth.

**How is deuterium content measured in a feather?** Following capture of a bird, a single outer rectrice feather is removed for isotope analysis. About 500 micrograms (a small single fingernail clipping) of feather is burned under special conditions yielding hydrogen ( $H_2$ ), nitrogen ( $N_2$ ), and carbon monoxide (CO) gases. Hydrogen gas is separated and the  $\delta D_f$  determined using isotope ratio mass spectrometry.

Now consider how this method is applied. It was first validated in Hobson and Wassenaar, 1997 and Wassenaar and Hobson, 2001 where a good correlation is shown between the  $\delta D_f$  in feathers and growing season precipitation  $\delta D_w$  for neotropical migrant songbirds. Experimentally derived  $\delta D_f$  contours are shown in Figure 2 – the contours parallel  $\delta D_w$  (data not shown), validating the schematic pathway in Figure 1. A latitude gradient is clear over central and eastern North America while altitude gradients contribute significantly in the mountain west.



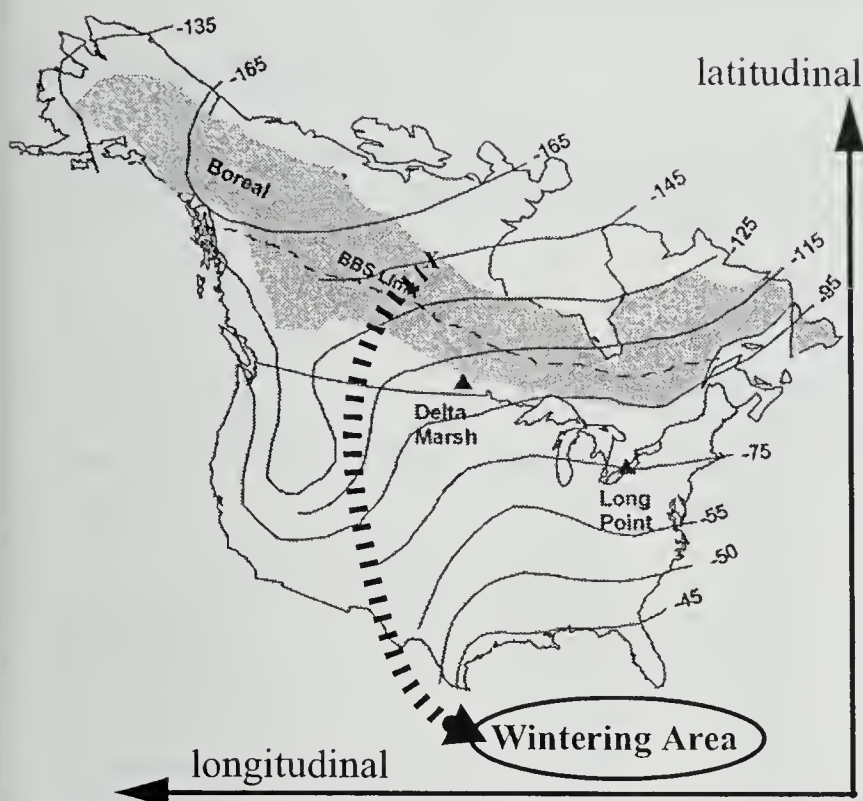


Figure 2. (reproduced from Wassenaar and Hobson, 2001 with permission) Feather  $\delta D_f$  for North America. The  $\delta D_f$  values are indicated on the right edges of contours in units of parts-per-thousand from VSMOW.  $\delta D_f$  values are negative in North America with latitudinal gradient (-45 in SE to -165 in Arctic) and little longitudinal gradient.

Recently Hobson and coworkers (Hobson, et al., 2004) demonstrated use of hydrogen isotopes to first suspect, and then locate missing breeding populations of breeding Bicknell's Thrush. Briefly, the researchers captured and performed feather isotope analysis on 64 Bicknell's Thrushes captured from known breeding areas (six study sites indicated within larger dashed oval of Figure 3, Panel A; one is in the Catskills region of New York State). Data is presented in histogram form in Panel B (light bars). Following migration of Bicknell's Thrush populations to their wintering grounds in the Dominican Republic, researchers again captured 83 birds for feather isotope analysis and plotted these data in Figure 3, Panel B (dark bars). Note the lower enrichment  $\delta D_f$  values from the wintering area birds (-100 to -140; dark bars) compared to the breeding area birds (light bars). This indicates more northerly breeding populations than previously known. Indeed, upon further field work at least one additional breeding population (located at Mine Madeleine, Panel A) was subsequently discovered. The  $\delta D_f$  values of Bicknell's Thrush feathers from this breeding site were between -100 to -121, thus accounting for some of the missing populations. Additional populations (-140 to -120) are presumably located even further north of this site.

Deuterium isotope analysis provides quantitative breeding ground information on a north-south gradient across North America, but less useful information on discriminating along the east-west gradient. This limi-

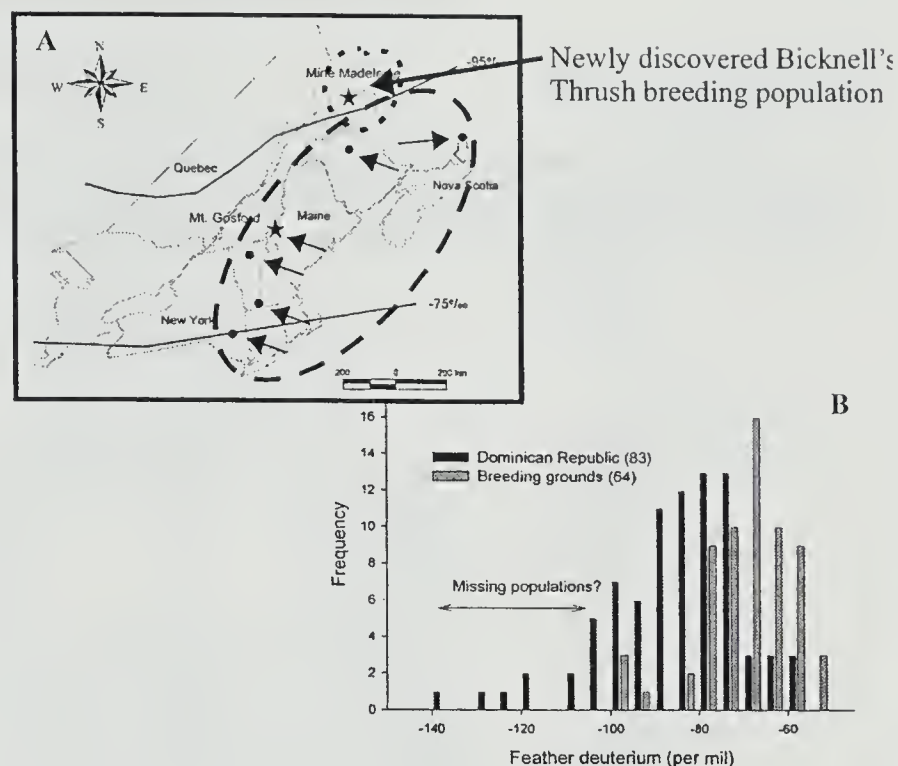


Figure 3. (reproduced from Hobson et al., 2004 with permission). Panel A shows breeding ground study sites within larger dashed oval (small arrows) and newly discovered site within smaller dashed circle. Panel B shows feather  $\delta D_f$  from breeding (light) and wintering grounds (dark).

tation could be overcome with a second stable isotope, or a unique chemical or biological component with longitudinal information. Towards this identification, east-west gradient genetic markers have been described in Yellow Warblers suggesting a species specific second marker (Milot, et al., 2000). Identification of additional latitudinal and longitudinal markers is an active area of research (Clark et al., 2004). Eventually sufficient markers may be identified so as to provide the breeding ground coordinates for a large fraction of captured birds, unlocking a wealth of otherwise nearly inaccessible information.

Thanks to Bob Andrie, Gerry Rising, and Leonard Wassenaar for reviewing a earlier draft of this article.

Clark, R.G., Hobson, K.A., Nichols, J.D. and Bearhop S. (2004) Avian Dispersal and Demography: Scaling up to the Landscape and Beyond. *The Condor* 106, 717-9.

Hobson, K.A. and Wassenaar, L.I. (1997) Linking breeding and wintering grounds of neotropical migrant songbirds using stable isotopic analysis of feathers. *Oecologia* 109, 142-8.

Hobson, K.A., Aubry, Y. and Wassenaar, L.I. (2004) Migratory Connectivity in Bicknell's Thrush: Locating Missing Populations with Hydrogen Isotopes. *The Condor* 106, 905-9.

Milot, E, Gibbs, H.L. and Hobson, K.A., (2000) *Mol. Ecol* 9, 667-81.

Rosenberg, K.V., Barker, S.E. and Rohrbaugh, R.W. (2000) An Atlas of Cerulean Warbler Populations. Final Report to USFWS: 1997-2000 Breeding Seasons.

Wassenaar, L.I., and Hobson, K.A. (2001) A Stable Isotope Approach to Delineate Geographical Catchment Areas of Avian Migration Monitoring Stations in North America. *Environ. Sci. Technol.* 35, 1845-50.



## Report of the 69th Annual B.O.S. October Bird Count

Date: October 10, 2004

Compiler: Mike Hamilton

Weather Synopsis: Terry Yonker

The count area was generally influenced by high pressure with variably cloudy skies and moderate temperatures. Winds shifted from the southwest to the northwest with the passage of a weak early morning cold front that was characterized by a brief period of cloudiness. The day was precipitation free for nearly every section of the count

### Buffalo-Niagara International Airport

Sunrise: 7:23 AM

Sunset: 6:40 PM

TIME	WEATHER	TEMP	DEW PT	PRESSURE	DIR/WIND	REMARKS
Midnight	Partly Cloudy	54	42	30.07	W 7	
3:00 am	Mainly Clear	49	44	30.08	SW 3	
6:00 am	Partly Cloudy	50	42	30.10	NW 10	Weak Cold Front
9:00 am	Cloudy	49	39	30.18	N 6	
Noon	Cloudy	50	41	30.20	N 7	
3:00 pm	Partly Sunny	55	44	30.17	NW 8	
6:00 pm	Mainly Clear	55	43	30.17	N 8	
9:00 pm	Mainly Clear	47	43	30.20	NE 6	

**Compilation:** The following is a list of species recorded on the count together with the number of individuals tabulated. Bold face names indicate species for which acceptable written verifications were received. **F** represents first and **L** last dates for the fall migration, \* first date for the year. Where a species was recorded in three or fewer sections, the section numbers are given in parentheses ( ).

#### GEESSE - HERONS

Snow Goose	5	(6,7)	Bufflehead	25	(9)
Canada Goose	17,529		Common Goldeneye	4	(26)
Mute Swan	29		Hooded Merganser	9	(10,11,28)
Wood Duck	472		Common Merganser	267	
Gadwall	38		Red-breasted Merganser	272	
American Wigeon	61		Ruddy Duck	385	
American Black Duck	98		unspecified waterfowl	53	(3,20,22)
Mallard	3,873		Ring-necked Pheasant	10	
Blue-winged Teal	76		Ruffed Grouse	10	
Northern Shoveler	53		Wild Turkey	149	
Northern Pintail	14		Common Loon	379	
Green-winged Teal	188		Pied-billed Grebe	56	
Redhead	7	(4,7)	Horned Grebe	271	
Ring-necked Duck	262		Double-crested Cormorant	2,274	
Greater Scaup	92		Great Blue Heron	131	
Lesser Scaup	654		Great Egret	22	
Surf Scoter	32	(4)	Green Heron	1	(22)
White-winged Scoter	716	(3,4)	Blk-crowned Night-Heron	13	
unspecified scoters	4	(3)			

#### VULTURES - CRANES

Black Vulture	1	(10)	Red-tailed Hawk	203	
Turkey Vulture	367		unspecified buteo	2	(20)
Osprey	2	(12,23)	American Kestrel	49	
Bald Eagle	11		Merlin	10	
Northern Harrier	41		Peregrine Falcon	3	(3,7,23)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	31		Virginia Rail	1	(5)
Cooper's Hawk	23		American Coot	323	
unspecified accipiters	1	(20)	Sandhill Crane	3	(6)
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	(12,19)			



## PLOVERS – TERNS

Black-bellied Plover	29	(8,11)
American Golden Plover	3	(4)
Semipalmated Plover	8	(8)
Killdeer	520	
Greater Yellowlegs	21	
Lesser Yellowlegs	5	(6,8,10)
Solitary Sandpiper	L 1	(23)
Sanderling	48	
Least Sandpiper	5	(8)
Pectoral Sandpiper	20	
Dunlin	45	

Wilson's Snipe	2	(3,23)
American Woodcock	6	(18,27)
unspecified shorebirds	8	(10)
Bonaparte's Gull	1,176	
Ring-billed Gull	10,082	
Herring Gull	1,200	
Great Black-backed Gull	117	
<b>Black-legged Kittiwake</b>	F 2	(3)
unspecified gulls	508	(3,12,20)
Common Tern	3	(11)

## PIGEONS – SWALLOWS

Rock Pigeon	2,088	
Mourning Dove	1,895	
Eastern Screech-Owl	16	
Great Horned Owl	5	
Barred Owl	4	(14,28)
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	(4)
Belted Kingfisher	34	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	93	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	5	
Downy Woodpecker	280	
Hairy Woodpecker	76	
Northern Flicker	80	
Pileated Woodpecker	15	

unspec'd woodpeckers	3	(20)
Eastern Phoebe	37	
<b>Eastern Kingbird</b>	L 1	(4)
Blue-headed Vireo	16	
Red-eyed Vireo	L 2	(9)
Blue Jay	1,316	
American Crow	3,541	
Common Raven	34	
Horned Lark	48	
<u>E.a. praticola</u>	4	(4)
Tree Swallow	20	(5,11,18)
Barn Swallow	6	(19,20)

## TITS - WAXWINGS

Black-capped Chickadee	1,713	
Tufted Titmouse	117	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	72	
White-breasted Nuthatch	235	
Brown Creeper	34	
Carolina Wren	20	
House Wren	3	(7,9)
Winter Wren	20	
Marsh Wren	11	(10)
Golden-crowned Kinglet	399	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	303	
Eastern Bluebird	220	

Gray-cheeked Thrush	L 2	(5,6)
Swainson's Thrush	8	
Hermit Thrush	53	
Wood Thrush	2	(5,7)
American Robin	3,309	
Gray Catbird	35	
Northern Mockingbird	17	
Brown Thrasher	2	(3,16)
European Starling	32,929	
American Pipit	470	
Cedar Waxwing	520	

## WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler	4	
Nashville Warbler	9	
Magnolia Warbler	L 1	(3)
Cape May Warbler	1	(20)
Black-throated Blue Warbler	3	(3,9,12)
Yellow-rumped Warbler	550	
Blk-throated Green Warbler	L 8	
Pine Warbler	5	(1,9,13)

Palm Warbler	5	
Bay-breasted Warbler	3	(6)
Blackpoll Warbler	1	(7)
Black-and-white Warbler	1	(9)
American Redstart	1	(8)
Ovenbird	1	(12)
Common Yellowthroat	12	
unspecified warblers	1	(13)

## TOWHEES – HOUSE SPARROWS

Eastern Towhee	25	
Chipping Sparrow	314	

Field Sparrow	55	
Vesper Sparrow	1	(7)



Savannah Sparrow	32	Red-winged Blackbird	17,801
Fox Sparrow	1 (28)	Eastern Meadowlark	29
Song Sparrow	511	Rusty Blackbird	267
Lincoln's Sparrow	5	Common Grackle	8,372
Swamp Sparrow	78	Brown-headed Cowbird	700
White-throated Sparrow	1,455	Purple Finch	101
White-crowned Sparrow	275	House Finch	398
Dark-eyed Junco	300	Pine Siskin	8 (8,12,14)
unspecified sparrows	22 (20)	American Goldfinch	1,945
Lapland Longspur	8 (3)	House Sparrow	1,681
Northern Cardinal	361	unspecified birds	39 (20)

**Summary Information** – Total Species Observed ..... **154**  
Total Individual Birds Observed ... **128,921**

**Comparisons** – Associated charts, available from Michael Hamilton, give comparative summary information for the most recent decade, for the full 69 counts and decade by decade since 1935. A chart listing totals for each species per section for 2004 is also available. In addition the following notes are of interest:

**NOTES: First count record:** Black Vulture, 1; Black-legged Kittiwake, 2.

**Second decade record:** Virginia Rail, 1 – first decade record was 1 in '98; Sandhill Crane, 3 – first decade record was 1 in '03; Northern Saw-Whet Owl, 1 – first decade record was 6 in '02; Eastern Kingbird, 1 – first decade record was 1 in '97.

**Third decade record:** Sandhill Crane, 3 – previous record was 1 in '03 & 2 in '86.

**Highest count since 1935 (x the average):** Mute Swan, 29 (9.7 x); White-winged Scoter, 716 (8.4 x); Common Merganser, 267 (7 x); Common Loon, 379 (16.5 x); Bald Eagle, 11 (5.5 x); Merlin, 10 (10 x); Sandhill Crane, 3;

Common

Raven, 34 (17x); Tufted Titmouse, 117 (6.2 x); Pine Warbler, 5.

**Highest count in past decade (x the average):** Mute Swan, 29 (3.2 x); Wood Duck, 472 (1.4 x); Lesser Scaup, 654 (2.8 x); White-winged Scoter, 716 (3 x); Bufflehead, 25 (4.2 x); Common Merganser, 267 (2 x); Common Loon, 379 (7.7); Bald Eagle, 11 (2.2); Cooper's Hawk, 23 (1.5 x); Merlin, 10 (3.3 x); Peregrine Falcon, 3 (3 x); Sandhill Crane, 3; Semipalmated Plover, 8 (2 x); Hairy Woodpecker, 76 (1.6 x); Eastern Kingbird, 1; Blue-headed Vireo, 16 (1.5 x); Common Raven, 34 (2.1 x); Barn Swallow, 6 (3 x); Tufted Titmouse, 117 (1.5 x); Carolina Wren, 20 (1.8 x); Marsh Wren, 11 (5.5 x); Pine Warbler, 5 (5 x); Bay-breasted Warbler, 3 (3 x); American Goldfinch, 1945 (1.9 x).

**Lowest count in past decade (% of the average):** Lesser Yellowlegs, 5 (25%); Magnolia Warbler, 1 (20%); House Finch, 398 (61%).

**Sections and Observers:** Names of section compilers are in boldface.

1. Fontheill, ON: Art Hannah, **Lynne Landon**, Terry Yonker
2. Thorold, ON: Brian Ahara, Gordon Bellerby, **Kayo Roy**, Maggie Smiley, Alan Smith
3. Wilson, NY: **Willie D'Anna**, Dean Di Tommaso, Michael Drahms, Brett Ewald, Betsy Potter
4. Middleport, NY: Michelle Coblentz, Julie Eberhart, Don Harris, Jane Heyer, Marie Johnson, Alice McKale, Jim Pawlicki, **Bill Watson**
5. Oak Orchard, NY: Donald Brasure, Morgan Jones, Susan O'Donnell, **Thomas O'Donnell**
6. Port Maitland, ON: **Jerry Chapple**, Nina Chapple, John Stevens
7. Lowbanks, ON: Barbara Byron, Richard Byron, Edward Fuchs, **Mike Hamilton**, Liz Wells
8. Fort Erie, ON: Doug Happ, **Mike Zebehazy**
9. Grand Island, NY: Tom Bearss, Scott Bearss, David Friedrich, Mandy Dragoo, Mike Galas, Sylvia Galas, Ron Hacker, Sue Hacker, Jerry Lazarczyk, Susan O'Donnell, Thomas O'Donnell, **Gerry Rising**, Richard Salembier
10. Akron, NY: Donna V. DeLeon, Robert L. DeLeon, **Donald C. Roberson**, John Welte, Martha Welte, David Suggs
11. Buffalo, NY: **Alec Humann**, Nancy Vigyikan, Peter Yoerg, Tom Zulawski
12. Lancaster, NY: Marion Bee, Greg Coniglio, Melissa Coniglio, Kurt Fox, Paul Fuhrmann, Linda Holmes, Mahlon Miller, Nancy Miller, **Mike Morgante**, Gail Seamans
13. Batavia, NY: Doug Beattie, Elaine Dart, Kurt Fox, Tad Gerace, Charles Graney, Eileen Hull, Robert Hull, **Jane Mason**, **Max Mason**, Joe Salvador, Don Thureau
14. Hamburg, NY: Ken Brandes, Joanne Dobler, Fred Harrington, Glenna Leous, Marge Vogel, Mike Morgante, **Barbara Walker**, Margaret Wooley, Nancy Vigyikan
15. Java, NY: **Bill Bogacki**, Dennis Russell



16. Angola, NY: Patricia Andrie, Robert Andrie, Thomas Connare, Audrey Horbett, **Frances Rew**
17. Cattaraugus, NY: John Filor, **Robert Wagner**
18. Delavan, NY: **Bruce Chilton**, Michael Desha, James Landau, Karen Landau, Paul Scannell
19. Fillmore, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Ron Andrews, Faye Clancy, Barbara Cronk, Louise Mills, Roger Nicholson, Michael Raybuck, Theresa Rork, Linda Roth, Marion Smith, Wilma Saylor, Jim Talbott, Ann Voss, Jay Wilson, Jean Wilson, **Larry Wilson**, Richard Wilson, Roseanna Wilson
20. Dunkirk, NY: Lake Erie Bird Club: Allen Benton, Karen Brisley, Ken Brisley, Sylvia Clark, **Paul Farver**, Joanne Goetz, Tom Goetz, Joe Gula, Carol Hardenberg, Dick Miga, Terry Mosher, David Neveau, Lucille Neveau, Bob Peterson,
21. Cherry Creek, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Linda O'Brien, Kelly Suckow, **Bob Sundell**
22. Sherman, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Ann Beebe, Jim Berry, Seth Berry, Ranjit Laha, Linda O'Brien, **Bob Sundell**
23. Frewsburg, NY: Jamestown Audubon Society: Julie Heilman, Ranjit Laha, Ruth Lundin, Tom Simmons, Kelly Suckow, **Bob Sundell**
24. Salamanca, NY and Allegany State Park: Cattaraugus County Bird Club: **Tim Baird**, Barbra Henderson, Tom LeBlanc, Peter Yoerg
25. Allegany, NY: Cattaraugus County Bird Club: **Tim Baird**, Jeff Reed
26. Cuba, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: **Doris Burton**, Frances Hunt, Mary Jordan, Bruce Smalley, Robert Smalley, Denton Willett
27. Bolivar, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Russell Allen, **Doris Burton**, Helen Link, Marie Paxhia
28. Alfred, NY: Allegany County Bird Club: Charlotte Alderson, Russell Allen, Ellen Baker, Carol Behn, Wayne Brewster, Don Brink, Lorna Brink, Betsy Brooks, **Doris Burton**, Mary Lou Cartledge, **Diane Converso**, James Copenheaver, Pauletta Copenheaver, Paul Culley, Karol Doty, Audrey Dunham, Ann Eisenhardt, Peter Finlay, John Gradoni, Peter Gradoni, Geri Hills, Ralph Hills, Betty Kellog, Wayne Kellog, Barry Lash, Martha Lash, Cathy MacDonald, Marion McClure, Mary Ormsby, Sean Phelan, Ann Pipal, Bob Pipal, Vivian Pitzrick, Linda Pullman, Evelyn Ramsey, Nicole Ramsey, Ona Reynolds, Ernest Rositzke, Nancy Rouse, Mary Shields, Peter Smith, Jim Smith, Maureen Soule, Terah Soule, Bruce Taggart, Wilma Taggart, Wilma Taggart, Linda Travers, Cindy Vance, Jerry Vance, Mary Lu Wells, **Suzanne Wood**

**Total Number of Observers: 216**



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<http://www.bosbirding.org/>

## December – March Calendar

**\*\*Christmas Bird Counts are compiled on page 116.**



Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

**January 12: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.** Mark Kandel, Senior Wildlife Biologist, of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will talk about the DEC's "Grassland For Wildlife" Program and his experience with Henslow's Sparrows versus development in Lancaster.

**January 16: Sunday. Waterfowl Count of the New York State Ornithological Association.** This is the target date, but any date between Saturday, Jan 15, and Sunday, Jan 23, inclusive is acceptable. However, the best count of shifting flocks is attained if everyone uses the target date, weather permitting. Contact Jim Landau at 941-3869 or [kjlandau@localnet.com](mailto:kjlandau@localnet.com).

**January 26: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.** The meeting will focus on the bylaws changes, the Niagara River Greenway and committee assignments, and possibly other conservation issues.

**March 9: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.** Sheila S. Hess, Ducks Unlimited New York State Regional Biologist, will discuss: "How Birds are like Bees: the Wildflower Connection."



# The PROTHONOTARY



Published Monthly by the

## BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 70, No. 12 December, 2004

### THE MONTH: November

by Gerry Rising

Steve McLaughlin of Buffalo's National Weather Service Forecast Office called November 2004 "a mild snow-free month" and went on to describe it as "a bonus autumn month with plenty of dry weather and little of the usual turbulence which can often mark the last month of fall." The data bears him out: temperature average 42.5°F, 2.3° above average; precipitation 2.9 inches, about an inch less than normal; and 0.2 inches of snow, 11 inches below average. It is interesting that, after that terribly wet summer, our dry September through November have brought total precipitation for the year back to normal. Finally, birds moving south were offered little help by winds: on only seven days did they include any northern component.

In the remainder of this summary, I will speak to the roles November has to play for birders.

**Late migrants.** A Black-crowned Night-Heron was found on the 11th. A number of dabblers - Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail and Green-winged Teal - dallied with exceptional counts of shovellers - 638 on the 16th at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant - and blacks - 140 at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. (How many of today's bird-

ers realize that Black Ducks outnumbered Mallards until the 1950s?) An Allegany Osprey remained until the 30th. The only Common Tern record for the month was a single bird on the 28th at Niagara

Falls. And an Orange-crowned Warbler was found in Salamanca on the 9th.

**Expected migrants.** Loon numbers appeared low to me but that may be because Kurt Fox did not count birds along Lake Ontario the way he did last year. On the other hand, this year Mike Morgante counted 296 Horned Grebes at Evangola and Sturgeon Point. Only two Red-necked Grebes were reported, one of them inland in Allegany State Park, but in mid-month three Eared Grebes were at Batavia, where this otherwise rare species has become regular. Two Greater White-fronted Geese appeared at Iroquois where they were recorded on the 13th and 16th, but that was also the maximum count of Snow Geese for the month. I find that amazing when thousands of snows pass through the Montezuma reserve less than 150 miles to our east. The maximum count of Tundra Swans was 32 on the 13th at Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area, but other groups were seen through the last half of the month. A single California Gull and a single Sabine's gull were recorded as were two Black-legged Kittiwakes. (Much to my surprise, I just learned from a new book, *Gulls of North America, Europe and Asia* by Olsen and Larsson that this kittiwake is the commonest gull in the Northern Hemisphere. And if you don't find that unusual: the second most common is the Black-headed Gull.) An unspecified jaeger was seen off Hamburg on the 6th.

**Transition from autumn to winter species.** Diving ducks were beginning to accumulate. Some high counts: 2000 Greater Scaup and 100 Canvasbacks on the 20th in Niagara Falls, Ontario; 172 scoters of all three species together with 3000 Buffleheads and 600 Long-tailed Ducks in Fort Erie on the 6th; 600 Ruddy Ducks in Batavia on the 13th. Five Merlins appeared

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Jim Landau

at what Peter Yoerg calls Merlinville, their University at Buffalo South Campus winter roost. Rough-legged Hawks were seen all month with a remarkable 13 observed at Somerset on the 27th. The maximum Bonaparte's Gull count was 3000 on the 6th at Fort Erie and a few Little, Iceland and Lesser Black-backed Gulls were noted. The first Snowy Owl of the season appeared at Fort Niagara State Park on the 27th. A few Northern Shrikes were seen, the earliest on the first. A bit out of place were the 60 Horned Larks along the Bird Island Pier on the 7th. Few Snow Buntings were reported, the maximum only 23 in Niagara Falls on the 14th. Among northern finches, a single Common Redpoll appeared

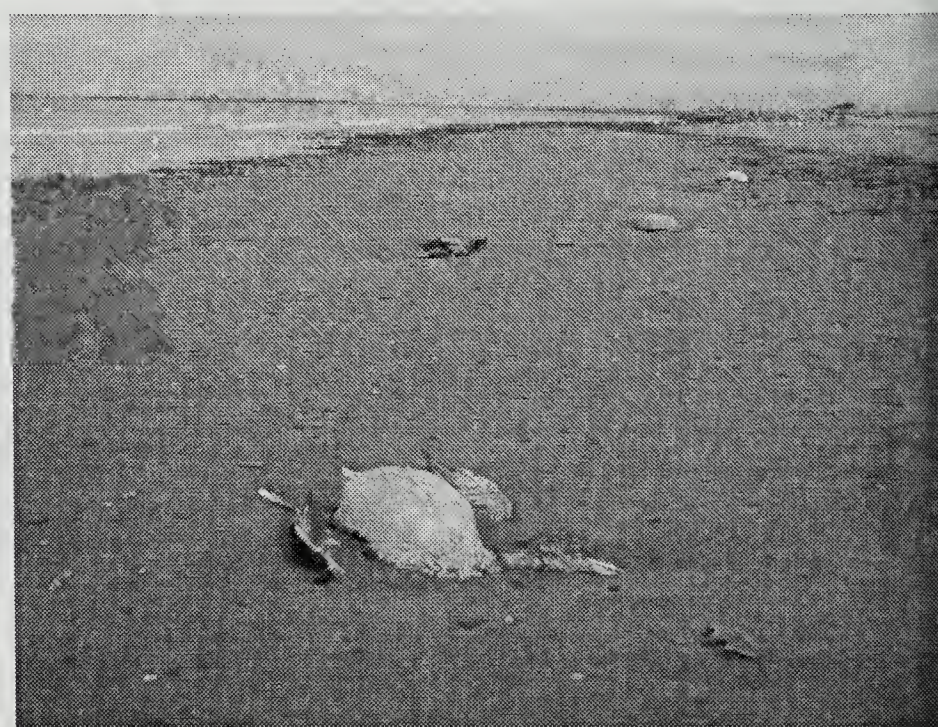
on the 13th at Lake Erie State Park and Pine Siskins arrived in at least small numbers, the maximum 14 at Wilson late in the month. Canadians predict a good year for boreal species, especially owls and finches: tough for the individual birds forced south out of territory but good for us.

**Extraterritorial individuals.** A *Selasphorus* hummingbird appeared at a feeder in Niagara Falls, Ontario, where it was reported by BOS birders (with photographs) from the 20th on. Tentatively identified by different observers Rufous, Allen's or Broad-tailed, perhaps depending on which was not already on the identifier's life list, the bird was finally captured and pinned down as the more likely Rufous Hummingbird. One of those dark-headed "Oregon" junco subspecies, *Junco hyemalis oregonus*, was found in Allegany State Park on the 21st and 30th and was photographed there.

**Brand new species.** Several birders added the newly split Cackling Goose to their life lists.

**Verification reports.** In his description of the Batavia Eared Grebes, Bill Watson noted: When "the birds swam away from us the high fluffy rear was dirty white with a vertical medial diffuse dusky broad stripe, which I believe Dean [DiTommaso] called the mule deer rear effect." Bill also commented on his Cackling Geese verification: "Although they were about 60% the length of most of the Canada Geese, they looked much smaller." Indeed, if the dimensions are proportional, they would be less than a quarter the size in volume! On a separate report he describes another cackler only half the length of a Canada: that would make its volume one eighth as large.

Jim Landau watched a "Peregrine Falcon busily engaged in eating a pigeon-sized bird." Some time ago *The New Yorker* reported a peregrine tearing apart a pigeon outside one of those Big Apple skyscraper restaurants and in the process turning off the patrons' appetites. Jim watched another peregrine "dive, swoop, hover, and roll in an aggressive attack on an assailant that was somewhere below us" in the Niagara gorge. "At times," he continued, "the falcon was soaring overhead as it prepared for another dive, allowing us a close, naked eye view of a full crop. Having shot right past us down the sidewalk level in its attack, it would disappear from view momentarily, only to reappear far below near the river. It would then quickly pump its wings to regain altitude in preparation for another diving attack. After repeated stoops, it flew off to the west, where it disappeared behind some tall buildings." The attack target was never seen. (cont)



Mike Morgante brings us these grim images of dead Common Loons on November 26, 2004 from Hamburg Town Park (16 dead loons were found on a short stretch of beach and the cause is probably Botulism poisoning). Editors note: ~40,000 Eared Grebes died of Botulism poisoning on Great Salt Lake during November-December 2004.



## NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Underlined common names, dates or localities indicate that an acceptable, detailed written verification according to the *Date Guide to Birds of Western New York and Adjacent Ontario* (Seventh Edition - Revised 2001) has been received and placed in the permanent files of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

\* - Indicates first record for the year.

F - Indicates first record for the migration.

L - Indicates last record for the migration.

(f) Indicates record from feeding station.

PDBA - Indicates Previously Documented Breeding Area.

<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-throated Loon	13	3	Yates	Klick, Harris
Common Loon	6	4	Hamburg	Morgante
"	12	5	Athol Springs	Turisk, DiTommaso
"	13	1; 10	Iroquois NWR; Yates	Klick, Harris
"	17	4	L. Chautauqua	Rew, Walker
"	20	3	Niagara Falls	Watson, Pawlicki
"	27	2	Sturgeon Pt.	Morgante
Horned Grebe	27	113	Evangola SP	Morgante
"	27	<u>183</u>	Sturgeon Pt.	Morgante
Red-necked Grebe	13	1	Wilson	D'Anna, DiTommaso
"	15	1	Allegany SP	Baird
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	13	3	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	16	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	27	1	Batavia WWTP	J Landau
D.-crested Cormorant	3	2	Golden Hill SP	Roberson
"	6	96	Fort Erie	Watson
"	7; 10	200; 160	Buffalo	Watson
"	20	6	LaSalle Pk, Bflo	Morgante
Black-cr. Night-Heron	11	1	Buffalo	Yoerg
<u>Gr. White-fr. Goose</u>	13	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick
"	16	2	Iroquois NWR	Watson
Snow Goose	13	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	14	1	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	16	2 white	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Lazarczyk
Canada Goose	27	1000; 600	Langford; Hanover	Morgante
<u>Cackling Goose</u>	14; 16	5; 2	Oakfield	Yoerg; Watson
"	16	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	27	6	Batavia WWTP	J Landau
Mute Swan	27	1	Langford	Morgante
Tundra Swan	6	7	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
"	6	18	Fort Erie	Andrle, Connare
"	13	32	Oak Orchard WMA	Klick, Harris
"	16	28	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	17	12	Bemus Pt.	Rew, Walker
"	26	29	Chippawa, Ont.	J & K Landau, Wojewodzki
"	27	16	Iroquois NWR	J Landau, Wojewodzki
Wood Duck	2	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	7; 20	2; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Gadwall	6	8	Morgan's Pt, Ont.	Watson
"	7; 17; 20	2; 2; 3	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	21	2	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
American Wigeon	20	12	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante
"	21	4	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
American Black Duck	13	140	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	20	60	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Northern Shoveler	13	290	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	16	638	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	16	2	Oakfield	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	21	1	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
Northern Pintail	16	57	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Green-winged Teal	7	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	16	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
Canvasback	16	2	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	20	100	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante
"	20	14	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
"	20	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Redhead	10	3	LaSalle Pk, Bflo.	Watson
"	19	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Ring-necked Duck	2	5	Niagara Falls, NY	Watson
"	16	8	Batavia WWTP	Watson
"	20	5	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
Greater Scaup	2	250	Niagara Falls, NY	Watson
"	3	170	Golden Hill SP	Roberson
"	20	2000	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante, Watson
Lesser Scaup	2	200	Niagara Falls, NY	Watson
"	3	4	Golden Hill SP	Roberson
"	6	12	Hamburg	Morgante
"	16	14	Batavia WWTP	Watson
Eider species	7F	1	Bird I. Pier	Watson, Pawlicki
Surf Scoter	6	89	Fort Erie	Watson
"	7	18	Bird I. Pier	Watson, Pawlicki
"	30	5	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
White-winged Scoter	6	42	Fort Erie	Watson
"	7	12	Bird I. Pier	Watson
Black or Surf Scoter	6	5	Athol Springs	Turisk, DiTommaso
Black Scoter	6	36	Fort Erie	Watson
"	7; 10	15; 5	Bird I. Pier	Watson
"	20	3	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Morgante, Watson
"	21	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
Long-tailed Duck	6	600	Fort Erie	Watson
"	30	200	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
Bufflehead	6	3000	Fort Erie	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
"	16	31	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	20	1000	Bird I. Pier	Morgante, Yoerg
Hooded Merganser	1; 12	16; 36	Times Beach NP	Andrle
"	11	31	Iroquois NWR	Watson



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	16	4; 14	Bat. WWTP; Oak Orch. WMA	Watson
"	16	6; 24	Oakfield; Iroquois NWR	Watson
"	21	52	Times Beach NP	J Landau
Common Merganser	7 - 28	39 max	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Ruddy Duck	7	1	Bird I. Pier	Watson, Pawlicki
"	13	600	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	16	358	Batavia WWTP	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	16	11	Oakfield	Watson
"	21	3	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
Osprey	<u>15</u> ; <u>23</u> ; <u>30</u>	1; 1; 1	Allegany SP	Baird
Bald Eagle	13	2	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	14	2 ad	Oak Orchard WMA	Yoerg, Henderson
"	21	3	Allegany SP; All. Reservoir	Baird
"	27	1	Queenston	S & T O'Donnell
"	29	3	Navy I.	S & T O'Donnell
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1 dark	Tonawanda	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	1	1	Times Beach NP	Andrle
"	13	1; 1; 1	Iroquois NWR; Yates; Por- ter	Klick, Harris
"	14; 15	1; 1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	S & T O'Donnell; Turisk
"	20	1	Porter	D'Anna
"	27	13	Somerset	J Landau, Wojewodzki
Merlin	<u>5</u> - <u>22</u>	5 max	UB south campus	Yoerg
Peregrine Falcon	7L	1	Athol Springs	Andrle
"	<u>12</u> ; <u>30</u>	1; 2	Buffalo	Yoerg
"	<u>21</u>	1 imm	Buffalo Harbor	J Landau
"	<u>26</u>	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	J & K Landau, Wojewodzki
"	<u>28</u>	1	Adam Beck Hydro	D'Anna et al
Greater Yellowlegs	13	1	Iroquois NWR	Klick, Harris
"	14L	1	Iroquois NWR	Yoerg, Henderson
Sanderling	6L	11	Rock Point PP	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
Dunlin	6	5	Rock Point PP	Watson, Pawlicki, Lazarczyk
"	14	1	Bird I. Pier	Yoerg
<u>Jaeger species</u>	6	1	Hamburg	Morgante
Little Gull	5	1	Athol Springs	Turisk, DiTommaso
"	11	2	Lewiston	D'Anna, Potter
"	25	1; 1	Queenston; Niagara-on-the- Lake	Yoerg, Henderson
Bonaparte's Gull	5	300	Woodlawn Beach SP	Watson
"	6	3000	Fort Erie	Watson
* <u>California Gull</u>	7F - 28	1	Adam Beck Hydro	D'Anna et al
"	20	1	Adam Beck Hydro	Morgante, Watson
"	21	1; 1	Adam Beck Hydro	Yoerg, Henderson
Iceland Gull	14F	2	Adam Beck Hydro	Potter et al
"	21	1; 1	Adam Beck; Whirlpool	Yoerg, Henderson



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
"	26	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	J & K Landau, Wojewodzki
Lesser Black-b. Gull	20	3	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Watson
"	21	2	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Yoerg, Henderson
"	27	1 ad	Evangola SP	Morgante
* Sabine's Gull	5F	1	Woodlawn Beach SP, Athol Springs	Watson, Lazarczyk, Turisk
"	7; 11; 14	1; 1; 1	Niagara Falls	Potter et al
Black-leg. Kittiwake	<u>5</u>	2 imm	Athol Springs	Turisk, DiTommaso
"	11	1 imm	Wilson	Potter, D'Anna
Common Tern	28L	1	Niagara Falls, Ont.	D'Anna, Potter
Snowy Owl	27F	1	Fort Niagara SP	S & T O'Donnell, D'Anna, Potter
Short-eared Owl	9F; 12	2; 7	Porter	Sharon
"	27	3	Yates	S & T O'Donnell
<u>Rufous or Allen's Hmgbd.</u>	20	1	Niagara Falls, Ont. (f)	Morgante, Watson, Pawlicki
"	21	1	Niagara Falls, Ont. (f)	D'Anna et al
"	25	1	Niagara Falls, Ont. (f)	Yoerg, Henderson
Northern Shrike	1	1 imm	Tonawanda	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	14	1	Bethany	Beattie
"	17	1	Mayville	Rew, Walker
"	23	1	Ellery	Moshers
"	27	1	Batavia WWTP	J Landau, Wojewodzki
Common Raven	21	4	Allegany SP	Baird
"	30	1	Alma	Beattie
Horned Lark	7	60	Bird I. Pier	Watson, Pawlicki
Carolina Wren	6; 16	1; 1	Bethany	Beattie
"	7; 28	1; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	11	1	Salamanca	Baird
"	18; 29	1; 1	South Wales	Bee
"	20	1	Queenston	Watson, Pawlicki
Golden-cr. Kinglet	7	2	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	16	1	Oak Orchard WMA	Watson
"	16	1	Iroquois NWR	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	26	13	Chestnut Ridge Pk	Morgante
Eastern Bluebird	7; 17; 20	4; 2; 2	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	27	1	Brant	Morgante
Hermit Thrush	1	2	Tonawanda	Watson, Lazarczyk
Northern Mockingbird	6	1	Hamburg	Morgante
"	28	1	South Park, Bflo.	Rew
Orange-cr. Warbler	<u>9L</u>	1	Salamanca	Baird
Fox Sparrow	1	6	Tonawanda	Watson, Lazarczyk
"	5; 11L	1; 1	Lancaster (f)	Morgante
"	7	1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Swamp Sparrow	7; 20	2; 1	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
Dark-eyed Junco	21; 30	1; 1	Allegany SP	Baird
<u>J. h. oreganus</u>				
Snow Bunting	13F	5	Batavia WWTP	Klick, Harris
"	14	1	Batavia WWTP	Yoerg, Henderson
"	14	23	Niagara Falls, Ont.	S & T O'Donnell



<u>Species</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Red-w. Blackbird	16	160	Tonawanda WMA	Watson
Common Grackle	1	2	Tonawanda	Watson, Lazarczyk
Common Redpoll	13	1	Lake Erie SP	Mosher et al
Pine Siskin	1	1	Colden	J Landau
"	1; 2; 13	1; 2; 1	Blasdell (f)	Turisk
"	7	2	Sinking Ponds	Holmes
"	19 - 30	14 max	Wilson (f)	Potter
"	24; 25	1; 9	Colden	J & K Landau
"	29	1	Buffalo	Yoerg

Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this year: 283

Species, subspecies, and hybrids recorded for this month: 003

Total for the year 2004: 286

**Statisticians' Note:** If any observer wishes to know the status of their verification report, please contact the Statisticians and we will give them the reasons for our decision. Please mail reports for each month not later than the FIFTH day of the following month to the Compiler: Bruce Chilton 88 Pryor Avenue, Tonawanda, NY 14150; Email: BChi314159@aol.com.

## Birding Quiz

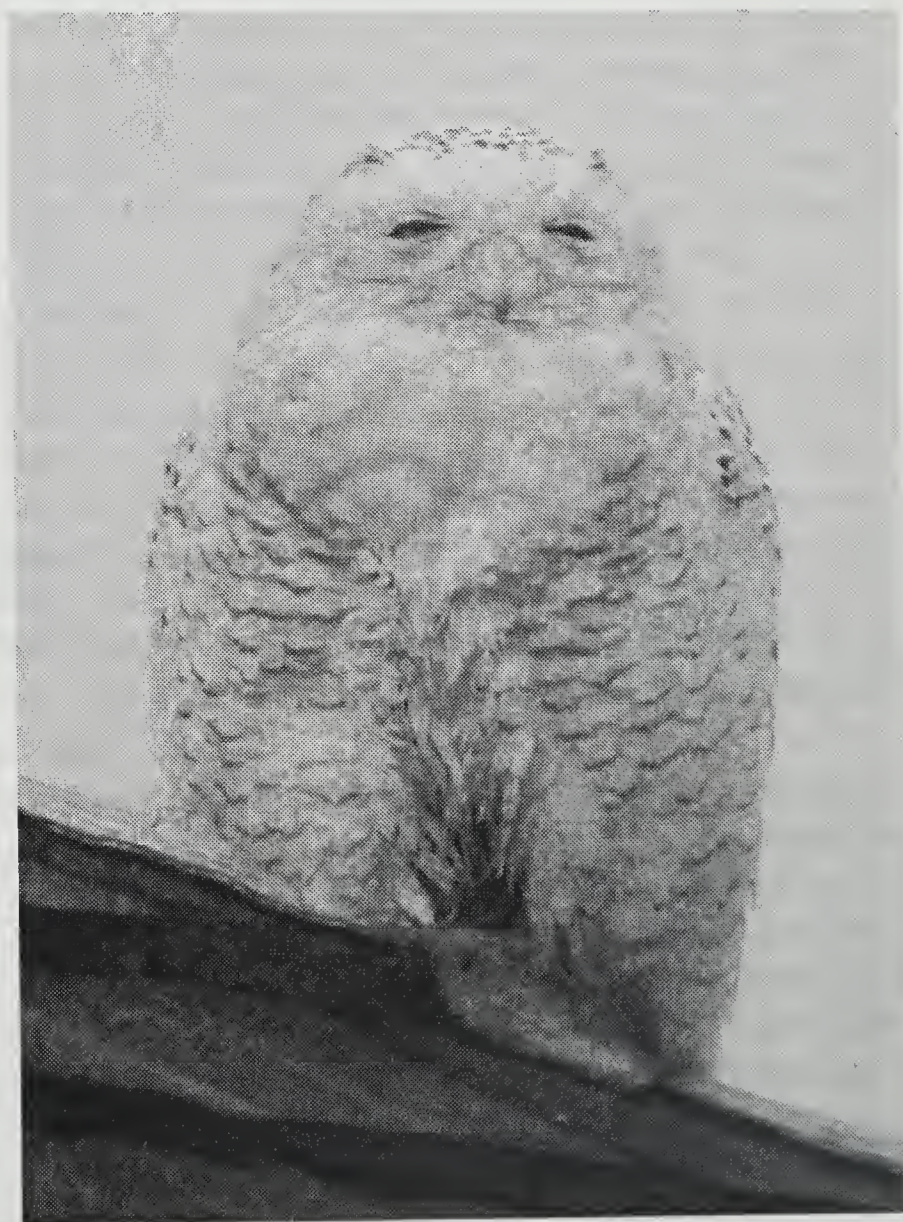
by Mike Morgante

This quiz focuses on similar identification field marks. Name one prominent identification field mark that the following species share (assume adult birds of each species):

1. Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, and Blue Jay?
2. Vesper Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, and American Pipit?
3. Black-crowned Night-Heron, Least Sandpiper, and Lesser Black-backed Gull?
4. Blue-headed Vireo, Least Flycatcher, and Nashville Warbler?
5. Glossy Ibis, Whimbrel, and Brown Creeper?

### Answers:

1. All species have crests.
2. All species have white outer tail feathers.
3. All species have yellow legs.
4. All species have white eye rings.
5. All species have downward curved bills.



Snowy Owl, Nov. 27th, 2004, Fort Niagara S.P., Willie D'Anna



Tim Baird's description of the "Oregon" junco states, "The possibility of an Eastern Towhee was eliminated by size, light bill and lack of distinctly reddish sides." It may seem like a stretch to consider a towhee similar to a junco, but anyone who has seen one of these strikingly colored juncos in the west will recognize the possibility of confusion with a towhee.

Once again I salute the 17 birders who contributed this month's reports. We should all recognize that they constitute THE central activity of the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

**Erratum: The Gray-cheeked Thrush that was in the October issue (Vol 70, No.10, p. 100) was photographed in the backyard of Willie D'Anna and Betsy Potter in the Town of Wilson, not at Rock Point Prov. Park.**

## **A confirmed Rufous Hummingbird in Niagara Falls, Ontario**

*by Allen T. Chartier*

Winter hummingbirds. The term sounds like an oxymoron to many. But, as research begun in the Gulf States of Louisiana and Alabama more than 20 years ago shows, an amazing number of western hummingbird species have been wintering in the East for quite some time, probably at least for thousands of years. As this research has expanded northward, the true magnitude of this phenomenon is beginning to be realized.

Prior to banding studies initiated in 2001 in Ohio, the state had approximately 16 confirmed records of Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*), or Rufous/Allen's (*Selasphorus* sp.). Since 2001, there have been at least 25 additional records in Ohio, many confirmed by capturing, measuring, and banding the birds.

An increase in reports does not necessarily mean an increase in birds, as greater public awareness, perhaps coupled with greater availability of late fall feeders, may be fueling this increase. True migrant Rufous Hummingbirds tend to pass through the Great Lakes region in August and September, while those occurring later tend to remain on site for 2-3 months, truly making them wintering hummingbirds.

As for the current status in the Niagara Region, the BOS database contains two prior records of either confirmed Rufous or *Selasphorus* sp. and the Ontario Birds Records Committee (OBRC) adds a third. A *Selasphorus* sp. was documented in Grimsby, Ontario, from 1-4 October 1984 (OBRC) [it is unclear whether this bird was actually in the Niagara Region]. An

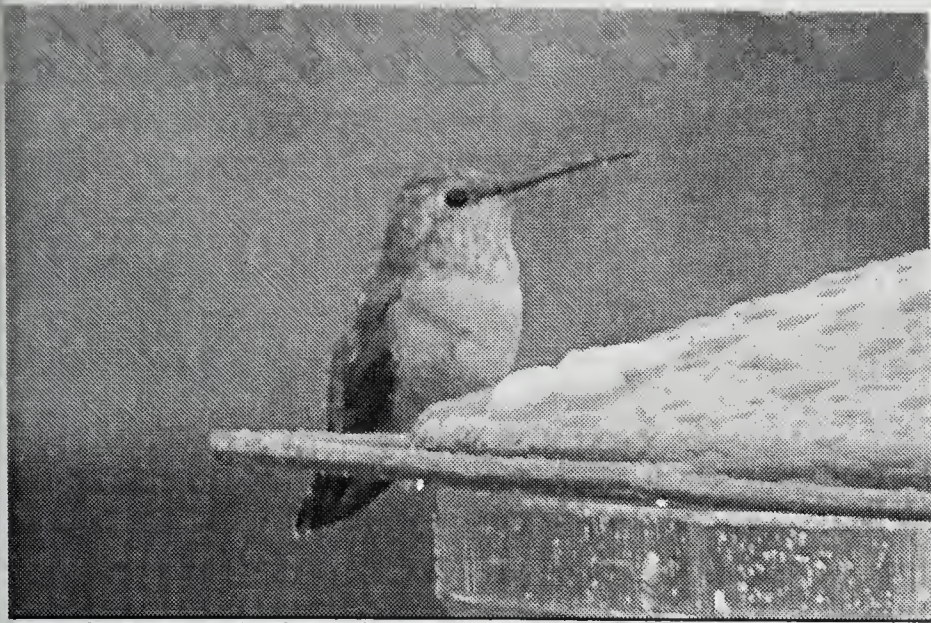
immature male *Selasphorus* sp. was documented in Grimsby Beach, Ontario, from 1 October – 10 December 1990 (BOS, OBRC). An adult male Rufous Hummingbird was documented in Colden Twp., New York from 4-13 October 1996 (BOS).

On 7 September 2004, homeowners Janice and Art Haines, in Niagara Falls, Niagara County, Ontario, noticed an unusual hummingbird at their suburban backyard feeder. It was photographed and noticed as different from the Ruby-throats, with which they were familiar. It is unclear to me exactly when this bird became known to the birding public, but by mid-November the bird's presence was widely known thanks to postings on ONTBIRDS by Kayo Roy. The homeowners were concerned about their hummingbird, which they nicknamed Hannah, lingering so late, and photos were taken and circulated on the internet requesting opinions on the bird's identity. Rufous Hummingbirds are significantly more cold-hardy than Ruby-throated (Calder 1993), so well-intentioned notions of "rescuing" healthy, uninjured Rufous Hummingbirds is unnecessary in addition to being illegal. Based on the photos taken by Harold Stivers, I posted the following lengthy opinion (edited here) on the chat group ONTBIRDS on November 18, 2004:

First, the bird shows peach-buff flanks and extensively rufous-based tail feathers, so one certainty is that the bird is a *Selasphorus* hummingbird. There are three species in this genus north of Mexico, Broad-tailed, Rufous, and Allen's, all of which have a pattern of vagrancy to the east to varying degrees. So initially all should be considered.

In my opinion, the bird is probably not a Broad-tailed, and the good shot of the fanned tail provides at least three clues to me. First, the shapes of the tips of the outer tail feathers should be blunter in Broad-tailed, while the bird in the photo shows more tapered tail tips, which is more consistent with Rufous/Allen's. Second, the amount of rufous on the outer three tail feathers is about equal to the amount of black, where Broad-tailed tends to have more black and less rufous. Third is the amount of tapering on the tail. I believe the photo is potentially misleading in this regard, as it





*Rufous Hummingbird photographed in Niagara Falls, Ontario, by Bill Watson..*

appears that there isn't much difference between the central and outer tail feather.

The rather plain face might suggest Broad-tailed, as it appears to lack rufous tones, but in one photo it appears to have some pinfeathers on the head and down the back. Body molt seems to coincide with flight feather molt in Rufous Hummingbirds, and could account for the apparent paleness of the face. But, what I see here is not out of the range of variation I have seen in Rufous. The apparent complete lack of iridescent gorget feathers occurs more often in juvenile male Rufous, but this condition could also be present in adult or juvenile females as well. The number and distribution of iridescent gorget feathers is an extremely variable character that is, at best, only suggestive of one sex over another, and seems less useful (or not at all useful) for aging these birds in the field.

Thus, I believe the bird is probably a Rufous OR Allen's Hummingbird. To identify which of these two it is requires a good look at the shape of r2, which is "notched" in Rufous and narrower and not notched in Allen's. Unfortunately, r2 is either missing or hidden in the tail shot! [A subsequent photo by Jean Iron showed the r2 quite well, and its shape was inconclusive.] Lacking this most diagnostic character, we're left with assessing the width of r5. While it would probably be easy to distinguish a broader r5 of a Broad-tailed from the much narrower r5 of an Allen's, distinguishing between Rufous and Allen's is more difficult. The measured widths of r5 in Rufous and Allen's actually overlap each other, so sometimes the only way of untangling and ID is to first correctly age and sex the bird, then use long-established in-hand criteria (Stiles 1972) to determine the species. Evaluating tail feather widths in the field, or in photos, on such a small scale can be a considerable challenge (or impossible).

Assuming this bird is a Rufous or Allen's Hummingbird, it is clear that it is not an adult male as it lacks any rufous on the back, and does not have a full orange-red gorget. Juvenile male can also be eliminated, as they will usually show some rufous on the upper tail coverts, and sometimes even up onto the rump. Also, the central rectrix (r1) has more rufous at the base in immature males than in females of any age, and this will usually be visible beyond the tips of the upper tail coverts. The Niagara Falls bird appears to be all-green from crown to tail, which suggests to me the bird is a female.

In-hand, we use a 10x magnifier to examine the bill for "corrugations", which are tiny wrinkles on the surface of the maxilla that only juvenile (hatch year) birds show. By November or December, these corrugations can be quite subtle and difficult to see, so great care must be taken to be sure if the bird has them or not. This is the single most reliable character for aging all hummingbirds (Ortiz-Crespo 1972). Plumage patterns are more variable, and have some degree of uncertainty as a result. Thus, I cannot venture an age on this bird because I cannot examine the bill. However, r2 tends to be more "notched" in adult females and less so, or often not notched at all in juvenile females. Juvenile female Rufous/Allen's that show little or no notch in r2 are essentially not field-identifiable, and species ID must be confirmed with measurements.

On December 2, 2004, I made the trip to Niagara Falls to attempt to capture and band the bird (under a banding permit issued by the Canadian Wildlife Service to the Holiday Beach Migration Observatory), and determine its identity. Cindy Cartwright, one of only two other hummingbird banders licensed in Ontario, assisted me. After the bird was captured and banded, I posted the following diagnosis (edited here) to ONTBIRDS:

The bird was easily captured, as has been my typical experience where I've banded these birds in northern areas. Once in hand, the bill was examined for "corrugations." The bird did show shallow corrugations on approximately the basal 60-70% of the upper mandible, which clearly indicated it was a hatch-year (immature) bird. The bird was showing 4 iridescent orange-red gorget feathers, where a week ago she was showing none.

The wing length of 44.59 mm indicated the bird was indeed a female, regardless of whether it was a Rufous or Allen's. Most females of North American hummingbirds are larger than males. Also, the lack of rufous on the upper tail coverts, and restricted rufous



on the base of the central tail feather, supported the conclusion of female (Stiles fig. 2).

Now, having confidently aged and sexed the bird, we needed to turn our attention to identification, which was done by examination and measurement of certain tail feathers. Information in Stiles (1972), still the best reference available, was used to identify the bird. This appropriate use of this information involves first aging and sexing the bird, followed by species identification.

Known age and sex Rufous and Allen's Hummingbirds are best distinguished in-hand by measuring the widths of the central tail feather (r1) and the outer tail feather (r5), and noting the shape of the second tail feather from the center (r2). If a bird shows a clearly "notched" r2, then it is easily identified as a Rufous (Stiles fig. 3). The Niagara Falls bird showed an extremely subtle "notch" in-hand on r2, as well as in photos, a condition that could be approached by some Allen's Hummingbirds. The shape of this tail feather was more suggestive of Rufous than Allen's, but alone would not be conclusive (Stiles fig. 2). So, the identification was in the hands of the measurements (Stiles table 1).

It is important to note here briefly that there are two subspecies of Allen's Hummingbird. One is the widespread and migratory subspecies (*Selasphorus sasin sasin*) breeding along the Pacific coast of California and mainly migrating southward into Baja California, Mexico (Mitchell 2000). The other is a more range-restricted and generally non-migratory subspecies (*S. s. sedentarius*), breeding on California's Channel Islands and the adjacent mainland (around Los Angeles). *Sedentarius* presents some problems, because it is intermediate between *S. s. sasin* and Rufous in some characters. And, while *S. s. sasin* has a shorter bill than Rufous, *S. s. sedentarius* has a longer bill! If *S. s. sedentarius* were entirely sedentary as its scientific name implies, this would not be an issue. But the first specimen of Allen's Hummingbird collected in Louisiana actually fits *S. s. sedentarius* (N. Newfield, pers. comm.)! So, however remote the possibility, even compared with a vagrant Allen's (*S. s. sasin*), *S. s. sedentarius* must also be considered.

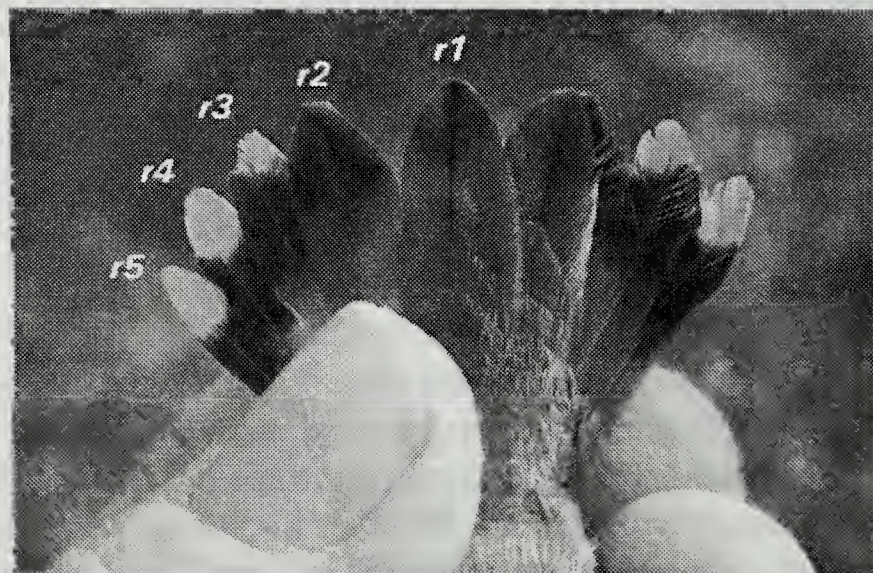
So, how did the measurements stack up with Stiles? The width of the central tail feather (r1) on the Niagara Falls bird was measured as 8.29 mm. This measurement is slightly above the range of (*S. s. sasin*) and near the upper size range of (*S. s. sedentarius*), while it is near the midrange for Rufous. This measurement is strongly suggestive of Rufous, but not conclusive.

The width of the outer tail feather (r5) on the Niagara Falls bird was measured as 4.16 mm. This measurement falls well above the range for either subspecies of Allen's, so this measurement is conclusive for Rufous.

For additional support, we can look at Wing Length (wing chord), Bill Length (exposed culmen), and Tail Length. This bird's Wing Length of 44.59 mm suggests Rufous. The Bill Length of 17.53 mm was not useful. The Tail Length of 27 mm suggests Rufous.

The number of reports of *Selasphorus* hummingbirds in the "east" are a clear indication that such records are a rare but annual phenomenon, and the birds are definitely not lost! See <<http://www.trochilids.com/USA/2003rual.html>> for a map of last winter's reports of eastern Rufous and *Selasphorus* sp. In fall/winter 2004 there were 7 *Selasphorus* (6 confirmed Rufous) in Indiana, 1 *Selasphorus* in Minnesota, 1 Rufous in Michigan, and 6 *Selasphorus* (5 confirmed Rufous) in Ohio. Additionally, enough of these birds are recaptured each year to lay to rest the myth that they are doomed to die when they visit our area. I recently recaptured a Rufous in Zanesville, Ohio that I banded at the same home last year where it was last seen December 27, 2003. Hard evidence, in the form of specimens of Rufous Hummingbirds dying from exposure to our winters, are in short supply, while there is ample evidence, in the form of banding recaptures, to support the idea that some do survive quite well. A few will die, of course, as is the case even in central Mexico, but blanket statements that they are all doomed is untenable with the current state of our knowledge and evidence. Healthy Rufous Hummingbirds in "the north" only require that we keep their sugar water (4:1 ratio) from freezing; they'll survive on their own with no other help from humans.

A detailed report on the Niagara Falls Rufous Hummingbird was submitted to the Ontario Bird Records



Tail feathers of Rufous Hummingbird captured in Niagara Falls, Ontario, December 2, 2004.



Committee, along with in-hand photos taken. Photos of this birds tail, taken in-hand, can be found at: <[www.ofo.ca/photos/rufoushummer](http://www.ofo.ca/photos/rufoushummer)>. Harold Stivers' photos can be found at <[www.ontfin.com/Hold/Hummer.htm](http://www.ontfin.com/Hold/Hummer.htm)>, and Jean Iron's photos can be found at <[www3.symnpatico.ca/jeaniron/selasphorus.htm](http://www3.symnpatico.ca/jeaniron/selasphorus.htm)>.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Janice and Art Haines for sharing this bird with more than 400 birders, and for granting me permission to band this bird. I appreciate the efforts of Kayo Roy to bring this bird to the attention of birders in the Niagara Region, and his efforts in all manner of other logistics involving this bird and for providing data from the Ontario Bird Records Committee. Thank you also to William (Bill) Watson and David Suggs for providing details from the Buffalo Ornithological Society database for previous reports of these hummingbirds in the Niagara Region.

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- This is publication #002 of the Great Lakes HummerNet.

## BOS/GOS Niagara River Field Trip

by Michael Hamilton

Sunday, November 14, was a beautiful day for the annual joint Niagara River field trip by the Buffalo Ornithological Society and Genesee Ornithological Society. At Fort Niagara we had a couple each of Red-throated and Common Loons, a White-winged Scoter, a few Horned Grebes and a number of Red-breasted Mergansers, Bufflehead, Scaup and Long-tailed Ducks plus a flock of flyover Snow Buntings. At Lewiston we added a Little Gull and eight Great Blue Herons in trees on the Canadian side. At the Sir Adam Beck overlook the California Gull was bathing in the north corner on the American side and a nearby immature Black-crowned Night-Heron magically alternated between visibility and complete camouflage among the rocks. We also had an adult Iceland Gull flying and on the water. Directly below the Horseshoe Falls we had excellent views of the immature Sabine's Gull wheeling in and out of the mist through a dazzling rainbow plus Common Loons and Long-tailed Ducks on the water; and above the Falls a nice mixture of the usual waterfowl including a Wood Duck a Hooded Merganser and two more Common Loons in the upper lagoon of the Engineerium Building. Fly-over raptors caused hundreds of gulls to lift into the air twice; the first, a Peregrine Falcon spotted by Sue O'Donnell high above the rapids and the second, a Cooper's Hawk just below the International Control Structure. Several Lesser Black-backed Gulls were spotted along the pier at the structure, one missing a foot. Altogether a delightful get together with our friends from Rochester under beautiful skies and with good birds and much jovial repartee between all.



Buffalo Ornithological Society  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
1020 Humboldt Parkway  
Buffalo, NY 14211-1293

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## February – March Calendar

BOS website  
<http://www.bosbirding.org/>



Buffalo-Niagara Region  
Dial-a-Bird: 716-896-1271

**February 9:** At 7:30 PM Mike Hamilton will discuss the Buffalo Ornithological Society Annual October Count.

**February 13, 2005: Sunday. Northern Chautauqua County Field Trip.** Meet at 9 AM at Dunkirk Pier. From the I-90 take the Dunkirk exit and go north on route 60 for 2.5 miles to Rt. 5 turn west (left) for one-third of a mile and turn right onto the pier. Leader: Dick Miga (672-7363/dmiga@netsync.net).

**February 23: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.** Buffalo Ornithological Society President Terry Yonker will do a presentation on "Birds, Bats and Wind Power: What Do We Know."

**March 1 - May 15: Hamburg Hawkwatch** at Lakeside Memorial Park in Hamburg (off Camp Rd. between Routes 5 & 20). Generally 10 AM - 3 PM weather permitting. Jim Landau (941-3869 or kjlandau@localnet.com).

**March 6: Sunday. Niagara County, New York, Owl Trip.** Meet at 1:00 PM near the Toys R Us entrance at the Summit Park Mall on Williams Road just south of Niagara Falls Blvd. in the Town of Wheatfield. Leader: Chuck Rosenberg (434-9403, crosenberg@adelphia.net, cell phone: 622-3278).

**March 9: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.** Sheila S. Hess, Ducks Unlimited New York State Regional Biologist, will discuss, "How Birds are like Bees: the Wildflower Connection."

**March 23rd Vaughn Lecture:** 7:00 - 8:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science. Dr. Kevin McGowan will lecture on "The Uncommon Crow: The Hidden Life of a Common but Misunderstood Bird."

**March 26: Saturday not Sunday. Lake Ontario Plain Field Trip** for early spring migrants. Leader: Willie D'Anna 731-4348 or dannapotter@wzrd.com. Meet at 8 a.m. at Tops Market in Wright's Corners. This is the east side of Route 78 at Route 104 north of Lockport.

**April 10: April Count:** All BOS members should participate. Contact: Mike Hamilton (881-6709 or mhsr@wzrd.com).

**April 13: BOS Meeting at 7:30 PM at the Buffalo Museum of Science.** Brad discuss "Statistical Analysis of BOS Count Data."















